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GAMEFAN

NEXT GENERATION VIDEO GAME MAGAZINE

VOLUME 5 • ISSUE 12



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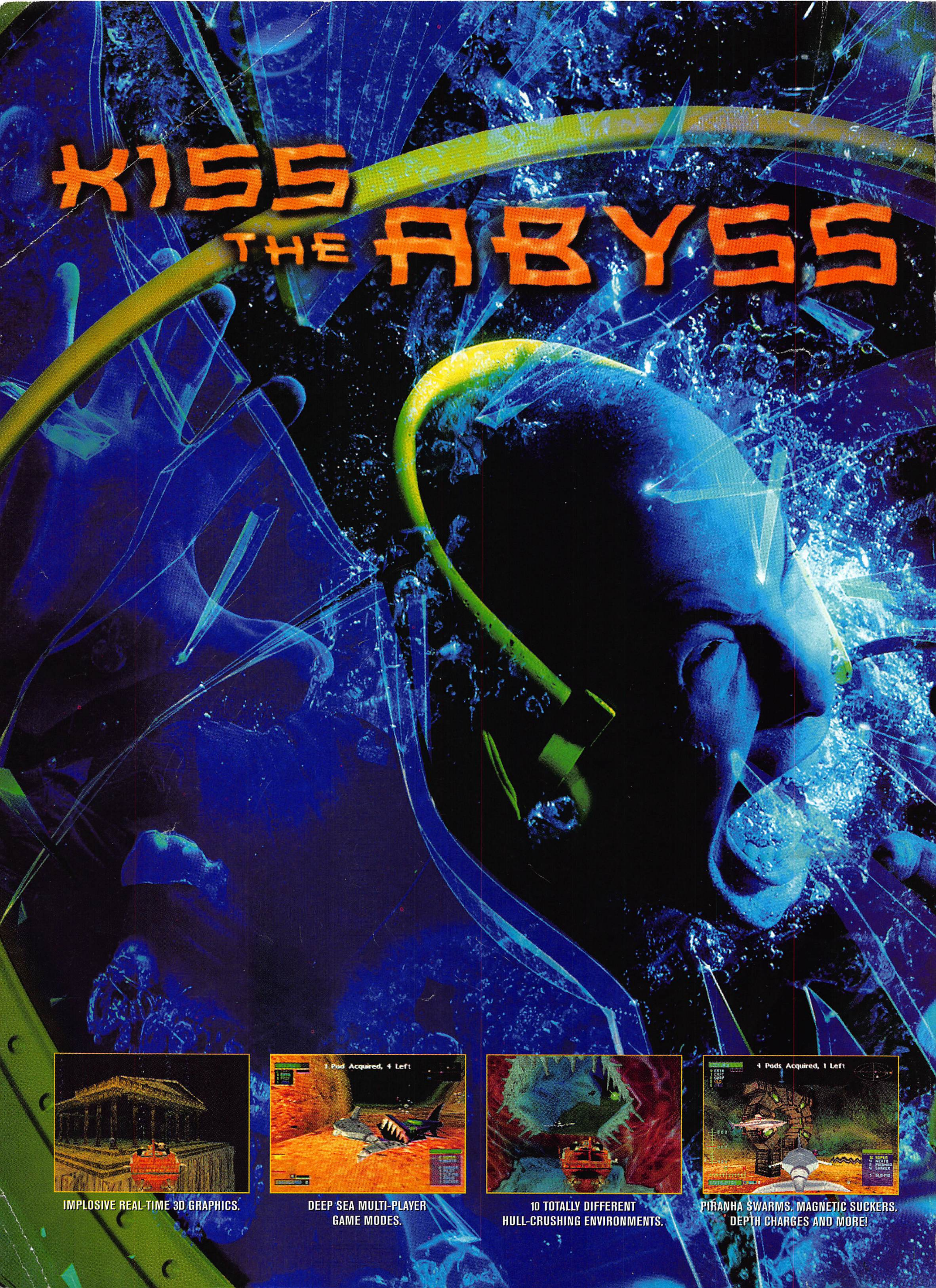
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Since 1992, when I founded GameFan Magazine I have acted as the magazine's Editor in Chief. It has been my pleasure to assemble and work with what I feel is the finest staff in video game publishing today. Not only those who remain, but those who have passed through in my time, have my deepest gratitude. Of the original team, few remain, as many of GF's original members have gone onto successful ventures throughout the industry. And now I too have reached a point in the evolution of my publishing career where I feel the need to move on as well.

I will stay on as the magazine's Creative Director, but otherwise I'll be climbing into the back seat for some much needed rest and let David Hodgson take the wheel. David, whom you all know as Chief Hambleton (a wily old coot) is one of the most talented editors I have ever met and is more than up to the task at hand. My alias E. Storm will continue to appear in these pages for as long as I remain in the employ of Metropolis, but who knows where we'll pop up after that...

Wherever it is, I hope to see you there and look forward to our next meeting. I would like to personally thank each and every reader who has supported me throughout the years.

Sincerely,
Dave Halverson

"As Ernest Storm sheaths his katana and wanders into the sunset, it has fallen onto the bony shoulders of Chief Hambleton to lead the GameFan behemoth and its rag-tag band of deviants into the gaming wilderness..."

As Ernest Storm sheaths his katana and wanders into the sunset, it has fallen onto the bony shoulders of Chief Hambleton to lead the GameFan behemoth and its rag-tag band of deviants into the gaming wilderness of 1998. Firstly, I'd like to thank Dave for his kind words, and rest assured, his continued support in the future will be invaluable. Don't fret, E. Storm fans; the platform king is still around these parts (in fact, he's readying himself for an extended romp through *Klonoa* as we speak...).

After the initial bewilderment of being thrust into the role of Editor in Chief, I'm pleased to report a continued fanaticism for Team GameFan's labor of love. This is present this month in a number of areas, not least Glitch's marvellous (not to mention exclusive) review of the shockingly spectacular *One*. Then there's a spot of *Resident Evil 2* action by yours truly, some crazed corridor game coverage by that armored Brit, Knightmare, and an extra special Hocus Pocus *Resident Evil 2* demo Game Shark extravaganza constructed by the mad Roxmeister himself.

However, our main excitement stems from the first real Role Playing Game to emerge for the Nintendo 64; *Quest 64*. The stunning real-time environments and convincing atmosphere are only a sparkle in this gem of a game. Trust E. Storm to deliver his honest opinion on this most eagerly anticipated title.

Other than that (and a Viewpoint section which really doesn't pull any punches), it's business as usual. All that remains is for you to sit down, relax, and enjoy our remarkably chunky and packed December issue. Have a very Merry Christmas! See ya in '98!

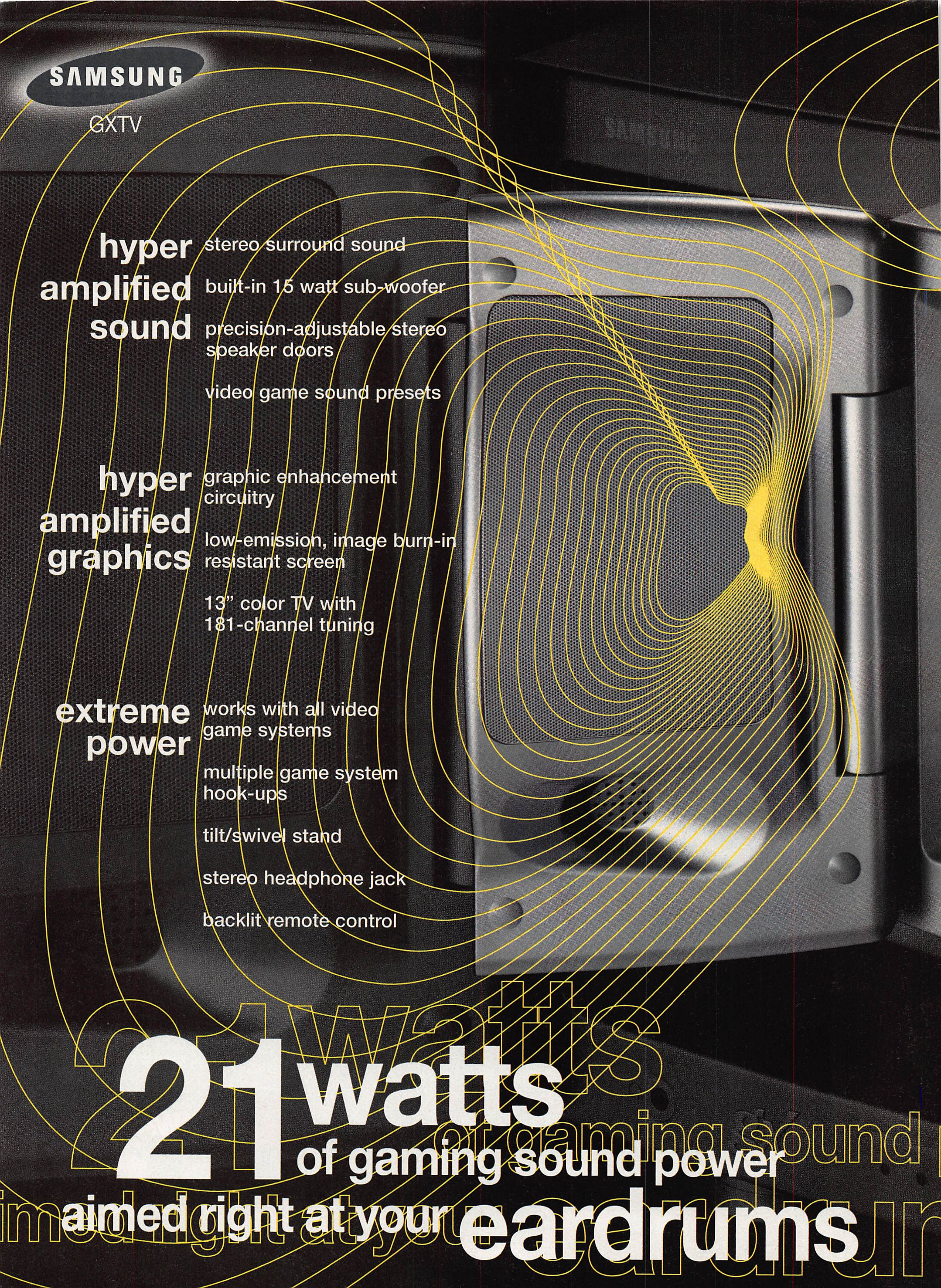
David S J Hodgson

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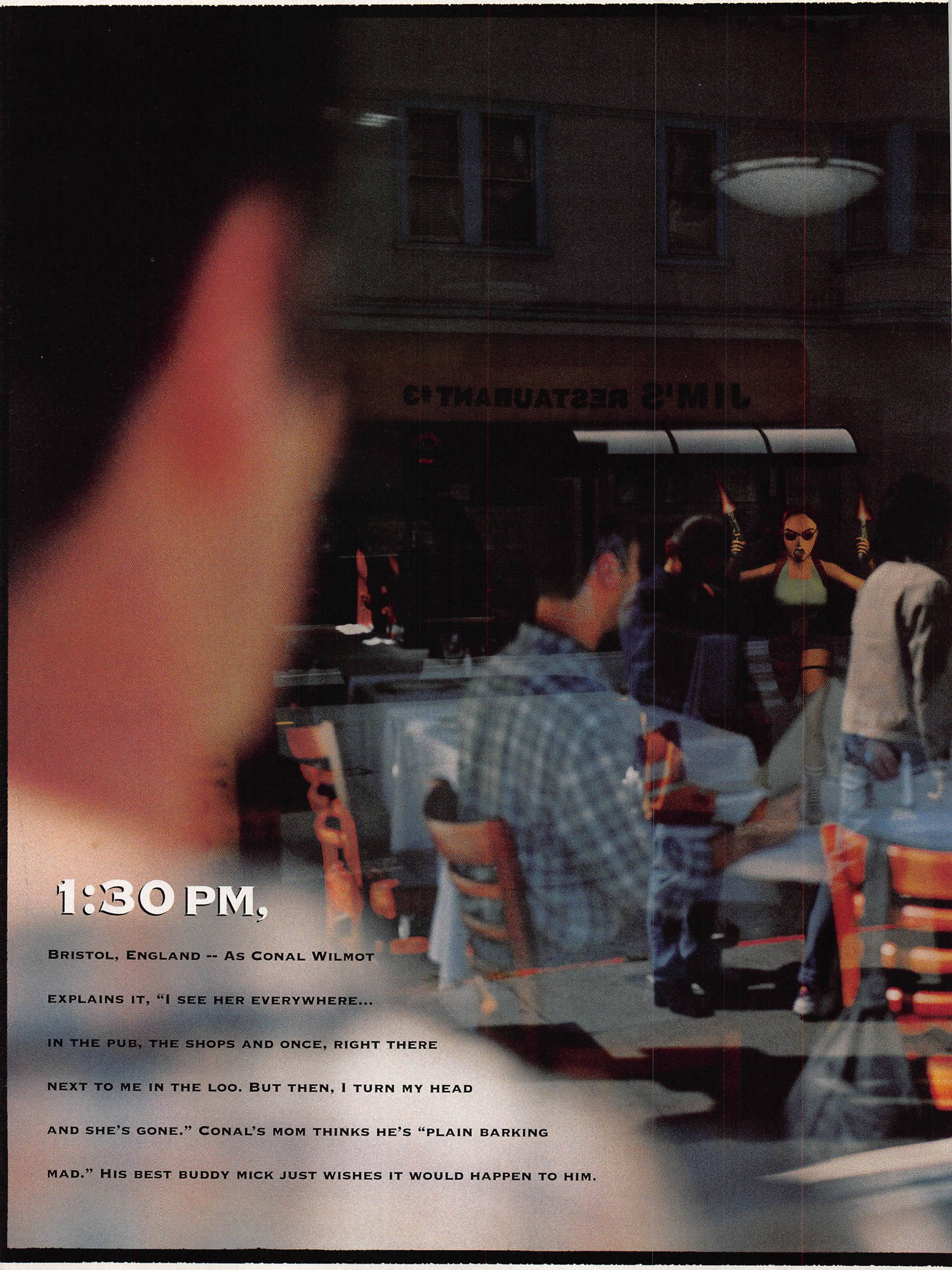




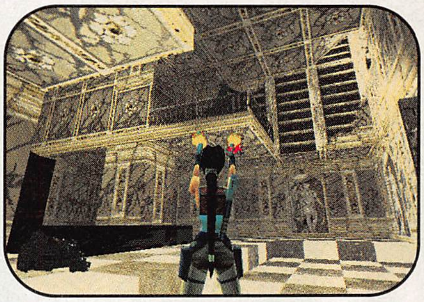
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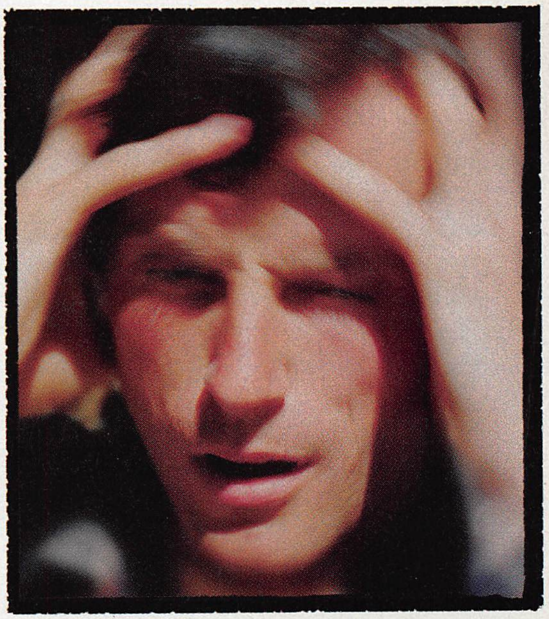

1:30 PM,
BRISTOL, ENGLAND -- AS CONAL WILMOT EXPLAINS IT, "I SEE HER EVERYWHERE... IN THE PUB, THE SHOPS AND ONCE, RIGHT THERE NEXT TO ME IN THE LOO. BUT THEN, I TURN MY HEAD AND SHE'S GONE." CONAL'S MOM THINKS HE'S "PLAIN BARKING MAD." HIS BEST BUDDY MICK JUST WISHES IT WOULD HAPPEN TO HIM.











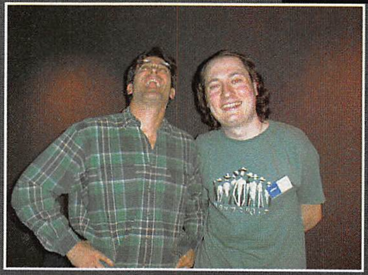
Inset photo (above): Without warning, tea time becomes TR II time.

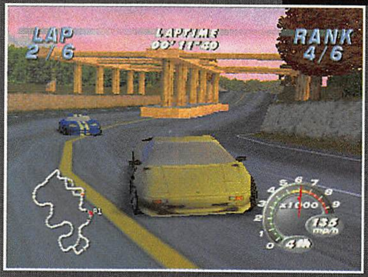
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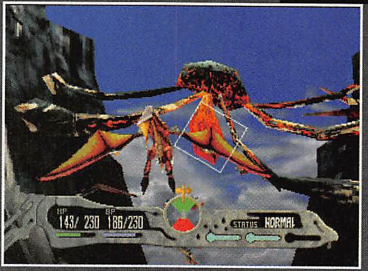


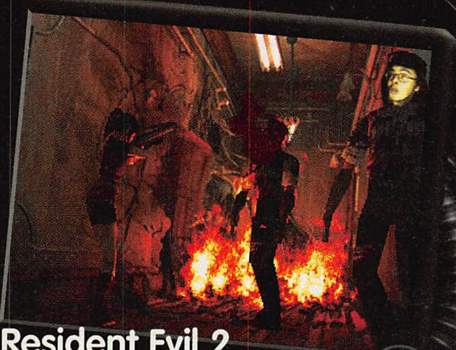








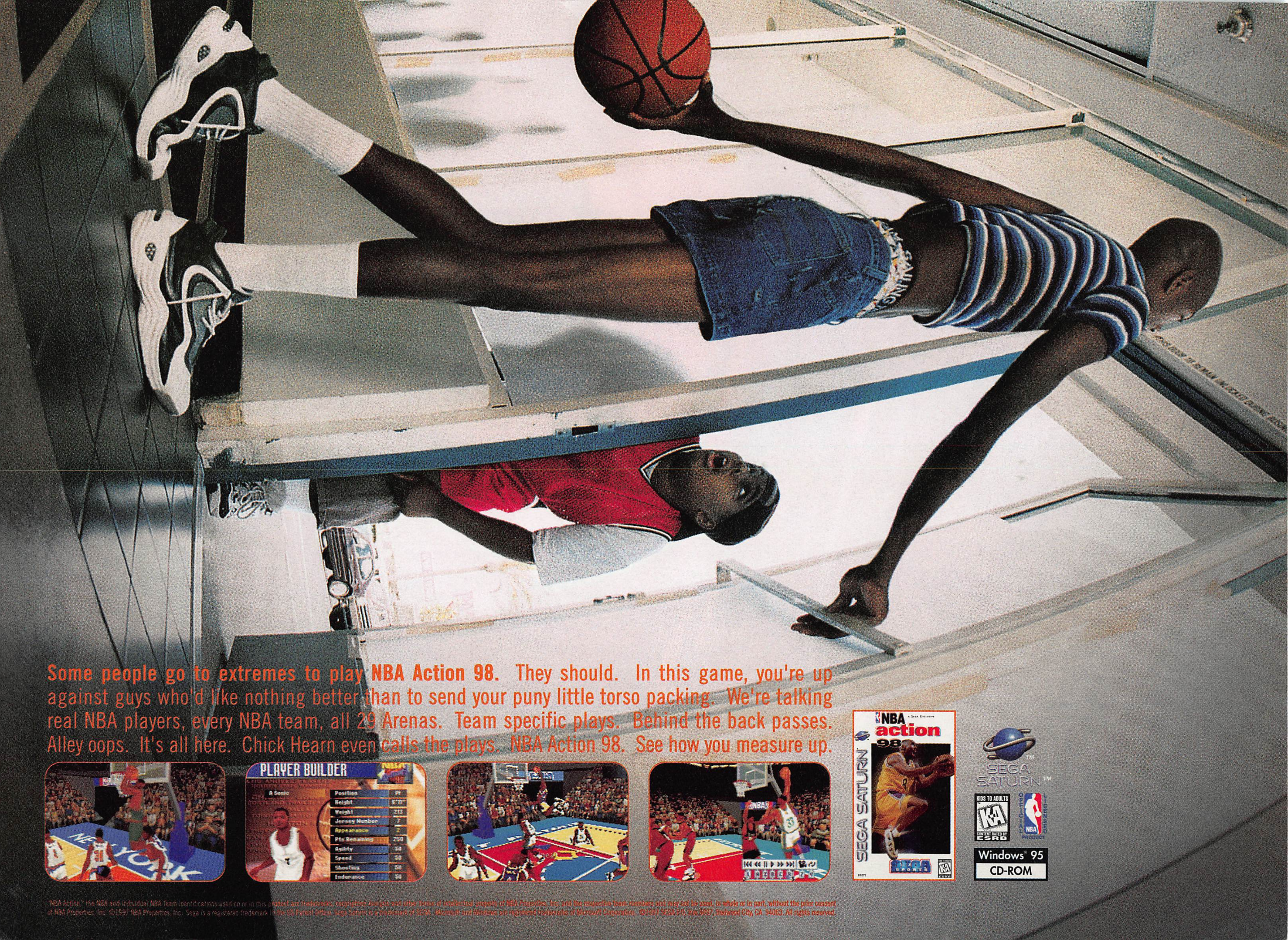




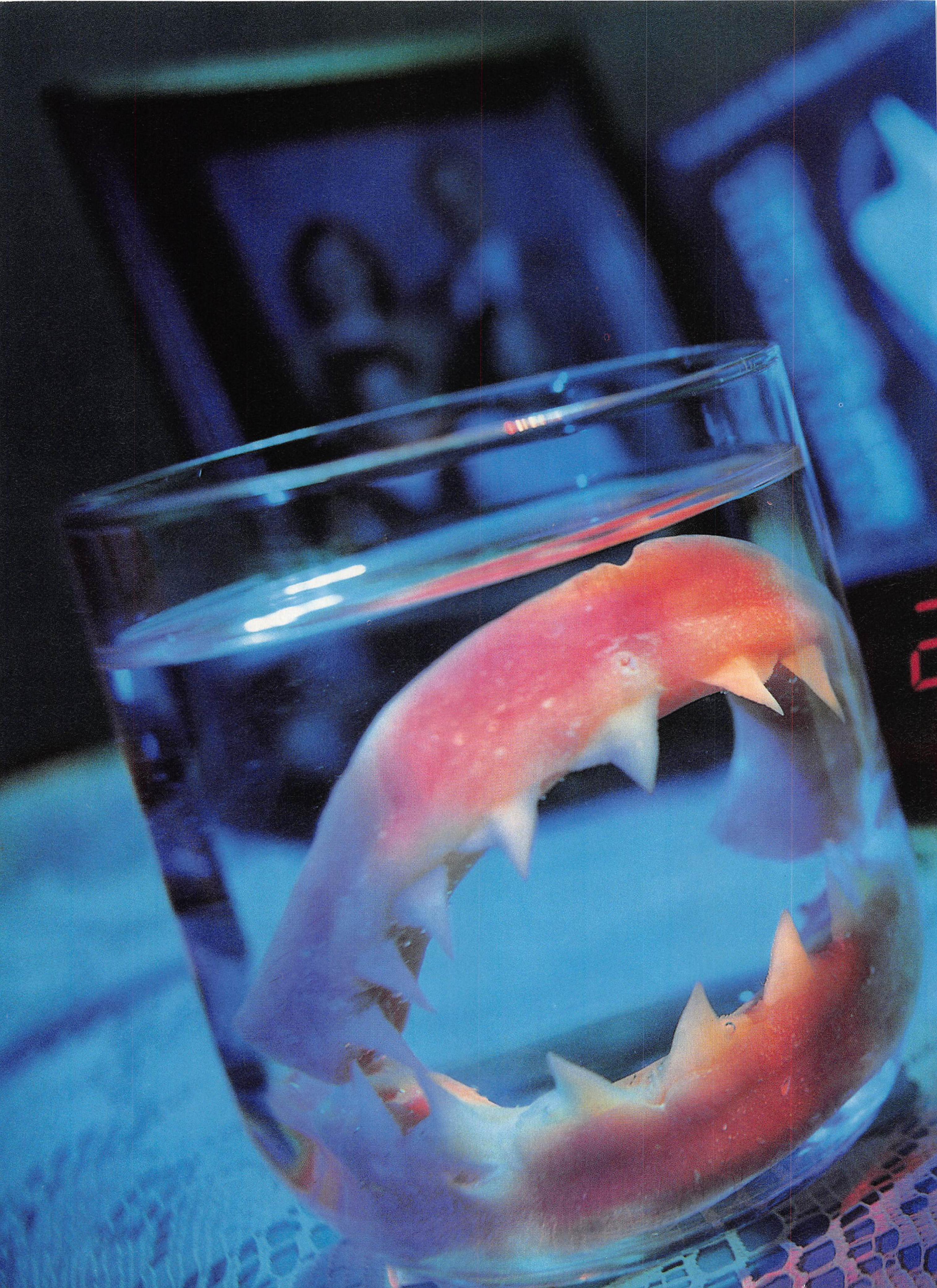
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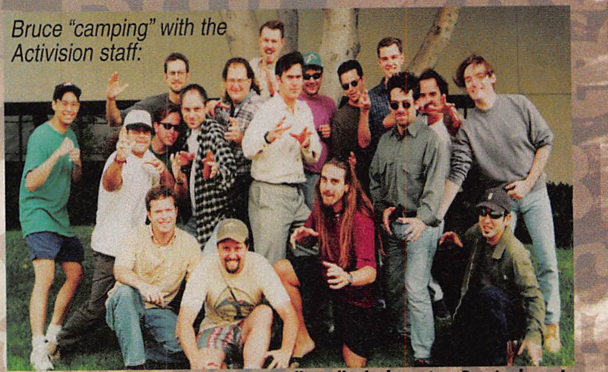




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GF INTERVIEW: BRUCE CAMPBELL

This month Activision invited GameFan down to their new HQ to shoot the breeze with actor and cult icon Bruce Campbell, star of the Evil Dead trilogy. Activision recently hired BC to provide the voice for Pitfall Harry in their forthcoming action/adventure Pitfall 3D, and between takes Knightmare and Substance D asked some questions. Here are the answers...



Bruce "camping" with the Activision staff:

GF: Hello, Mr. Campbell.
BC: The answer is yes, no, maybe and I don't know. And call me Bruce.
GF: OK, Bruce, how did you get involved with Pitfall 3D?
BC: I guess they (Activision) tracked my agent down. I had done a couple of CD ROM games before. One was for *7th Level*—no one knows what's happening with that one—and the other was for Konami. A game called *Broken Helix*. I never know how work happens. I just get these phone calls.
GF: What kind of a character is Pitfall Harry?
BC: Just your average guy, who's in way over his head.
GF: Have you ever played Pitfall?
BC: *'Yes, I love the game!'* No, I've never played it. But they showed me the demo and it looks tremendous. The motion and the movement of the main character are very impressive. It's going to be *'a great game.'*

BRUCE AND VOICE ACTING

GF: Do you enjoy doing voice acting?
BC: I do, I've always enjoyed the sound phase of things. On the movies I've worked on, some of the most controlled environments are where you replace your own dialogue. You sort of have another crack at acting. When you make a film sometimes it rains, or the sun goes down, or whatever, but the studio environment is very controlled. I like that.
GF: Is doing voice for a game similar to dubbing a movie?
BC: The first time I did a game they dropped off a script and it was about two inches thick and I was like, "What the hell is going on here?!" Because it's what if the gamer does this, what if the gamer does that. You know, what if he picks up this, pushes a button here. You have to have a response for everything. And when they go back to the same level you don't just want to have the same sounds again, you want to trigger a new sound. It's all about variation. With a movie you're matching only one thing. With games it's all about being different.

BRUCE AND GAMES

GF: Do you play games?
BC: Actually I watch my son play. I own a competing over-the-hill system that will probably be out of date in six months (*A Sega Saturn - Knightmare*). I watch him. He always calls me up and says, "Look, I got to the next level." His big thing right now is codes. We have to go on the internet, go to all these game sites and download all the codes. He bought a code book the other day. A 12-dollar glossy book with nothing but hints and tips and codes and he's in heaven. My son's a little gamer.
GF: Seen any games you like the look of?
BC: Believe it or not, I've been more impressed with the systems that I don't have. I saw some N64 games. They were very good, very fluid. And some PS stuff, like *Broken Helix*.
GF: You don't own a PlayStation?!
BC: No! I had to rent one just so I could play my own stinking game. And it sucked! I realize I should have just bought the other systems. I should have called you guys ahead of time!
GF: A lot of games these days have been influence by the Evil Dead movies and the character of Ash in particular.
BC: Yeah, like *Doom*, like *Quake*, like *Duke Nukem*.
GF: What do you think about that? Is it an homage or a rip-off?
BC: It's both, frankly. I'm flattered on one hand and insulted on the other. They should have just called me because I would have done a better job than the lame-ass that they hired: *"Come on let's go!" "Hey, groovy!" "Whoa!"* (said in a most un-BC-like fashion - K). It's like they got some guy from back in the tech room and said, "Hey you, come here, record this. All right, now pretend like you're tough."

EVIL DEAD - THE GAME?!

GF: Did you know that there was once an Evil Dead videogame on the NES?
BC: Yeah, there was. I know. It was an English game, set in a cabin.
GF: As far as you know, has anyone ever approached Renaissance pictures for the rights to do another Evil Dead game?
BC: They have, but the rights are really strange. *Evil Dead* 1, 2 and 3 are owned by different people. The first *Evil Dead* is owned by us, the second one was owned by Dino De Laurentis until his company went belly up and they had to sell it to Canal Plus, and the third one, *Army of Darkness*, is co-owned between Dino, Universal and us. So, yes, we have gotten the calls but our response is usually, "I don't know who owns the rights!"

"I NEVER watch horror movies. You know?! I think most of them are really stupid."

GF: If anyone ever pursued it, would you be interested in playing a voice/motion captured Ash?
BC: Yes, I would. As long as a guy like Sam Raimi could oversee it. I wouldn't be interested in showing up for someone else's part.
GF: As far as you know, has Sam ever shown an interest in getting involved with videogames?
BC: I know that he has, but Sam's a pretty busy guy and you've got to pretty much dangle a big fat carrot in front of his face to get him to notice.

HERCULES AND XENA

GF: Perhaps your most popular role right now is the recurring character you play on Hercules and Xena.
BC: Autolycus, The King of Thieves! I'm going there right after this to do two more.
GF: How did you get involved with those shows?
BC: Well, I got a call from Rob Tapert, the producer. Rob was involved in the *Evil Dead* movies, so it's all horribly incestuous. But they had a part that they thought would be good... and they were right.
GF: Do you enjoy the character?
BC: It's a fun character to play because I'm a ham actor by nature—in case you hadn't noticed—and the character is very broad. They give you a lot of leeway to fool around. The two lead roles for these shows get burnt out. Kevin Sorbo loves it when I come down. He goes, "Oh good, I get to go golfing now!" because that usually means they have me very involved in the story. And it's a totally different dynamic with Autolycus tormenting Hercules because he's always making fun of him, and he's thinking that they're partners now. And Herc despises him because he's a criminal. And Xena, well, he's just trying to get in her pants basically. And that doesn't work either.
GF: Xena started off as a sub character in Hercules...
BC: She sure did—and Universal executives went "Woo-hoo, who's that?!"
GF: Any chance of an Autolycus show?
BC: We have actually talked about it. But it doesn't seem like now is the right time. They know that eventually those shows will lose their steam, and they're trying to wait for the right time to start another one. But that's not for me to say, that's for the geniuses in the black tower...
GF: But it is in the cards?
BC: It has been discussed in a very loosy-goosy way. Because what's gonna happen is you're gonna publish this and I'm gonna get 60,000 e-mails of people saying "Hey, when's Autolycus coming? When's Autolycus coming?" and it's going to clog my e-mail box and I'm gonna come looking for you...
GF: What do you think of the direction that the shows have been taking recently?
BC: They're getting pretty damned weird. They're doing *Xena: The Musical* next—an all singing episode. Because Lucy Lawless has a good set of pipes. They're writing the music and scoring that one right now. They've already done a Hercules episode called 'Strictly Hercules' that's all dancing with Kevin Sorbo doing the mambo. I danced the Tango on that stupid show! I'm doing another *Hercules* episode soon that's set in modern day. I'm playing Rob Tapert, the producer. Because Kevin Sorbo—it's kind of secret—was injured recently and is a little slow getting back on the show, and the producers have to cover that up. So the show is about covering up the fact that your star isn't there. It's me playing Rob Tapert on fishing expeditions getting phone calls saying, "He's WHAT?!"
GF: Do you notice a difference between the Herc and Xena sets?
BC: Sure. At one time, *Xena* was the new kid on the block. So they were always trying a little harder, the stunt guys were always flinging themselves a little further, and everyone sort of had a chip on their shoulder. Because the *Hercules* crew would refer to *Xena* as The Little Show. At one point it was shot in 16mm. The early



Bruce discusses the finer points of the Pitfall 3D script.

episodes. But then they upgraded because they realized they could use the *Hercules* stock footage if they matched the mm. And now *Xena* has surpassed *Hercules* in the ratings, and it's kind of who's wagging whose tail?

GF: You recently directed an episode of Xena. *How was that?*

BC: It's great. The day goes very quickly.

GF: How about when you are directing yourself?

BC: That's hard. Because there's a lot of homework. Just when I think I've figured out all the shots I go, "Ahh I've got to learn my lines for tomorrow." Or vice versa. So it's kind of controlled panic for 8 days. But it's a lot of fun because you have a lot of leeway. Creatively, its very good. It really gets your juices flowing.

GF: Do you want to direct more?

BC: I'll do whatever I have to do to diversify. I think every actor should kind of explore what's out there. With the *Evil Dead* movies I was one of the producers so I understand what goes on behind the scenes.

PERSONAL

GF: Why did you get into acting?

BC: My dad was in advertising, and he wanted to be a painter. And my Grandfather was like, "Hahaha—I don't think so." Because this was the '50s, my Dad was pushed into being responsible. But he got into community theater as a diversion. So I remember when I was 8 I went to see him in a play. He was acting really weird. He was wearing makeup and dancing with women that weren't my mother, and it kind of dawned on me that if that was my job, I could screw around for my entire life. So that's what I decided. And he was very supportive as a result. He didn't want me to be tormented like he was.

GF: What kind of music do you listen to?

BC: You know what kills me is, the question now is "What's your favorite band?" I don't have a favorite band! I like singers. I actually like a lot of the classic crooners. I like Dean Martin. I like early Frank Sinatra before he lost his voice. You know, before his toupee got really bad. Classic stuff like that. I like some '70s stuff. I thought that was a pretty good decade for music. The '80s kind of sucked if you ask me.

GF: Do you read books?

BC: Yeah but I read real books. I read non-fiction. History books and travel books, stuff like that. Fiction does not interest me, because that's what I do all day! People ask, "Who are you going to be for Halloween?" "No one! I'm gonna pass out candy." That's the one day of the year I am not going to wear anything. I'll watch my kid run around and act like a fool.

GF: What was the last film you saw that you enjoyed?

BC: Geez. It was probably about ten years ago. I don't like summer movies. I run! I run from the theater. I think a lot of them are bad. I don't know how else to tell you that. I have to really think hard about the last movie that I really liked.

GF: What about TV shows?

BC: No it's the same thing. I get home at night, I don't want to turn on the TV. I don't want to pop a video in. Because that's what I do all day! Because when I watch a movie I go, "Haha, look at the actor looking at his mark!" I really notice that. One of my favorite hobbies is to watch an actor walk up and look at their mark just before they stop. It's really a great little thing. You just see a little eye moving.

GF: Are there any actors that you'd like to work with?

BC: Yeah, I think it would be nice to work one day with guys like Robert Duvall or Robert Redford. I like a lot of those Robert guys. I peripherally worked with Paul Newman on *The Hudsucker Proxy*, but just in rehearsals. Never on-screen. It's really great to see kind of the real big guys—men or women of either ilk. It's just an elusive thing because they're in such a different league. I get awe-struck as a fan when I see them as well.

CAREER

GF: Your choice of roles is sometimes strange. What attracts you to a part?

BC: One, if they want me. That's always a good start. It's weird, it's a lot of elements. It's not always money or choices. The life of an actor is very strange. There's a very small percentage of actors who can actually look at a pile of scripts and have their own choice. Probably 1% of the actors out there can do that. Then there are those of us who get offered SOME roles. They know that you've had big parts in small movies. So now the reward is you can have a small part in a big movie! You're working up the ladder. It's a kind of club. If you're in the leading man, low budget, exploitation movie club, that's fine. But you can't get into the mainstream club. You have to wait in the lobby.

GF: Do you sill get offered a lot of genre parts? Sci fi/horror flicks?

BC: Yeah, but it's really fun saying no. I mean *really* fun. Because you have to learn to say no. There are certain actors who will remain nameless, who never say no. And now they're permanently stuck. I feel like I can go back and forth between TV and movies. Television is about as homogenous a medium as you can get. It's very far removed from these cult movies in a weird sort of way. *Herc* and *Xena* are cult TV shows, but they're pretty popular world-wide.

GF: Do you have any inspirations to get back on the big







screen? Climb the Hollywood ladder?

BC: Not really. It's a horrible game. It starts to take away from what you are, if you're an actor. You have to become a political animal. I've never really been that. I don't go to parties, I don't go to schmooze, I don't go to openings. You'll never see me behind Tom Cruise giving him the rabbit ears. I don't go. I have a family. I've got two kids. I'm married. I try and live a nice, quiet life and you know—I have a good living. Beyond that, what the hell do you need? That's my feeling.

GF: Do you still hang with Sam Raimi and Robert Tapert and your other college buddies or is it only professional these days?

BC: It actually blends. Seeing them professionally is the fun. We don't get together to play poker and smoke cigars anymore because a lot of us have families now. But professionally it's a very casual, friendly situation. Half of them I went to high school with. I did an episode of *Xena* that was directed by a buddy of mine, John Cameron. And another buddy from high school, even junior high, directs other *Xena* stuff too—guy by the name of Josh Becker. Hey, it's incestuous, but fun.

THE LEGACY OF EVIL DEAD

GF: Do you still get recognized as Ash?

BC: Not really, because I look like such a generic guy when I walk around with my glasses on and no fake blood. Seriously. The cameraman who shot *Evil Dead 2* figured people would have to get about 3 inches from my face before they'd realize who I was.

GF: Would you let your kids watch the Evil Dead movies?

BC: Sure. When they're old enough to get in a car and drive to the video store, there's no way to stop 'em. But I've tried to impress upon them how fake it all is. It's rubber monsters, it's caro syrup, it's fake blood. They really know what it's all about. As long as they're old enough to understand that, then I don't really care. Because they see it all. They saw the cowboy show I did on Fox a few years ago (*Adventures of Brisco County Jr.* - K). They know that, as an actor, you play all kinds of stuff. They know that you're not really a guy with a chainsaw on your arm, and you're not really cutting up monsters. Although there's one or two kids that probably still believe that.

GF: OK, I have to ask this. Are we ever going to see an Evil Dead 4?

BC: No, and what people don't seem to understand is that it's all about economics. It's ALL about economics. It's not that I will or won't do it, it's not that Sam Raimi will or won't. We would. We would do it in a second. But no one would put up the money. It's a sliding scale. The first *Evil Dead* cost $350,000 and made world wide multiple millions. The second one cost $3.5 million and made a little less money. The third one cost $13 million and didn't make enough money. SO the fourth one would be like 60 million dollars and it would make ten dollars. Normally if you want a successful string of sequels, they're all kept at a certain budget and you don't spend another penny. You can make your *Friday the 13th* parts 8 & 9, and you make the *Nightmare on Elm Streets* 6 and 7 only because they're controlling the budget. We never intended to do a series of movies. You know at the end of the first *Evil Dead* I'm dead. It made money, so I came back. The second one made money, OK I'm still alive. The third one didn't make money, OK I'm dead.

GF: So at this point in your career you and Sam wouldn't be willing to go back to low-budget, guerrilla filmmaking to do a fourth Evil Dead.

BC: I don't know. Even if we did, how often can you scream bloody murder? How often can run around with a chainsaw on your arm? It's boring to me! It's Snoresville! Working with Sam is very interesting but... You see, the big difference is: I don't think about those movies any more. I just don't think about them! I don't wake up every morning and think "Oh, *Evil Dead*!"

GF: But you've pretty much attained your cult status through these movies.

BC: But that's the truth. That's what people need to understand. They think, because I've been this guy over the course of 12 years, that I must either love the character or love horror movies. I NEVER watch horror movies. You know?! I think most of them are really stupid. And the only reason why we decided to go full out was, if we were going to make a horror movie, lets make a HORROR movie! With no holds barred. That's how you do it. You don't make some cheeseball thing with someone looking behind doors I mean, you go for it! We made the last one, *Army of Darkness*, back in '91. That's a long time ago. To me it is. In movie years it's forever!

GF: But the fans don't seem to realize that.

BC: And God bless 'em! They can buy the videos.

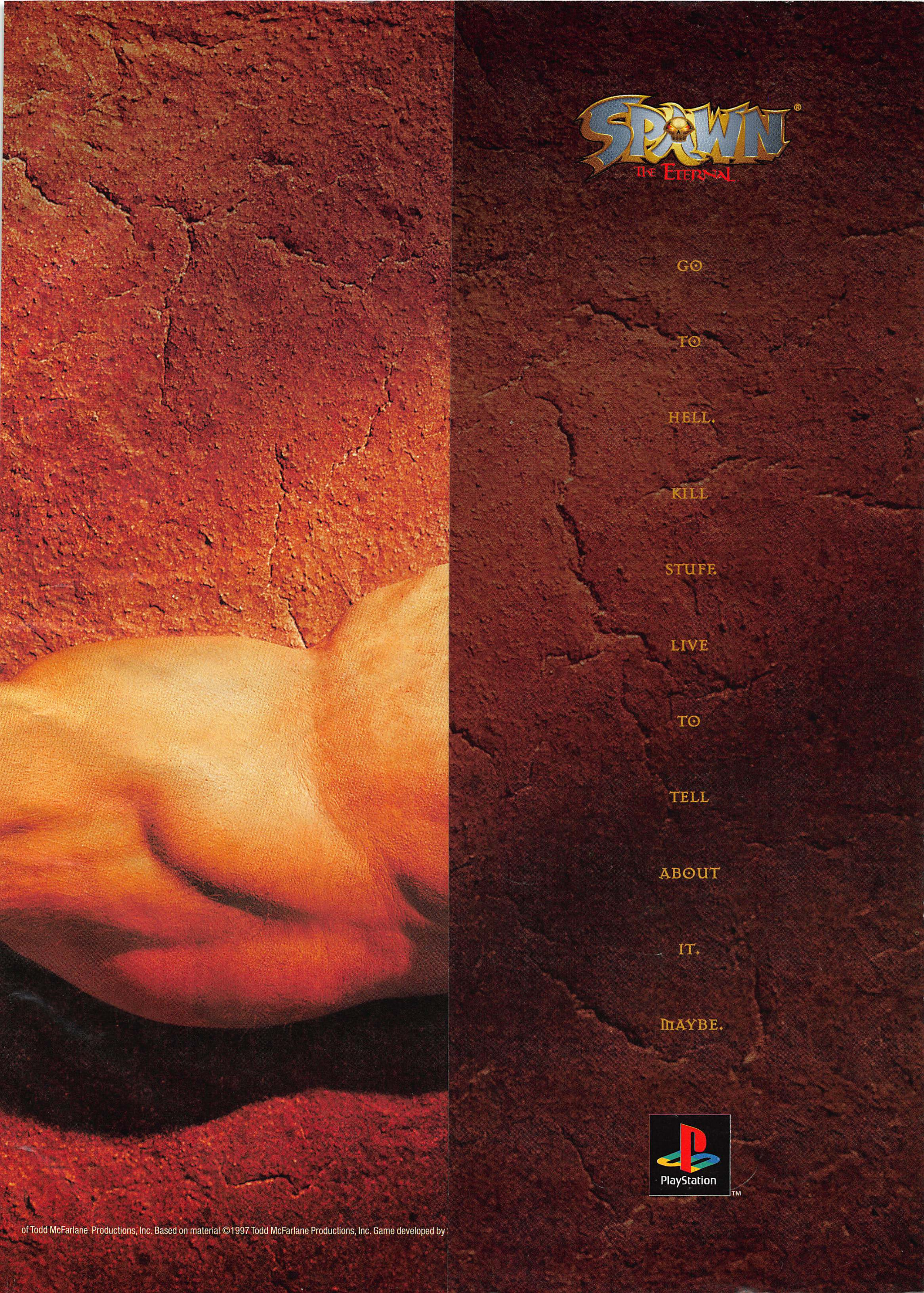
GF: Speaking of Army of Darkness, *which ending do you prefer?*

BC: I prefer the original (where Ash wakes up in a post apocalyptic future - K). Because that was the filmmakers cut. If it works or if it doesn't work is besides the point. It was the original ending. If you fail, you fail. But, you know, the studio wanted a quote-unquote "happier ending", so that's what they got. They got a John Woo rip off. And it's like, OK, whatever. But I always prefer the original.

GF: Bruce, thanks for you time.

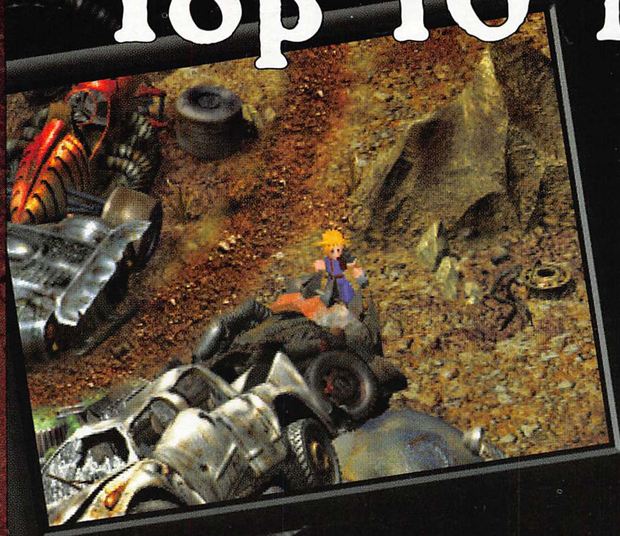
BC: There, you have it.


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SPAWN
THE ETERNAL
GO
TO
HELL.
KILL
STUFF.
LIVE
TO
TELL
ABOUT
IT.
MAYBE.
PlayStation
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Top 10 Most Wanted



1 Final Fantasy VII PS
READERS' TOP TEN

FOR THE WEEK ENDING 9/30/97

READERS' TOP TEN

1. *Final Fantasy VII* - PS
2. *GoldenEye* - N64
3. *Resident Evil: DC* - PS
4. *Street Fighter EX+α* - PS
5. *Castlevania SOTN* - PS
6. *Mega Man X4* - PS
7. *Tekken 3* - Arcade
8. *Mario Kart 64* - N64
9. *Star Fox* - N64
10. *Mario 64* - N64

READERS' MOST WANTED

1. *Resident Evil 2* - PS
2. *Tomb Raider 2* - PS
3. *Diddy Kong Racing* - N64
4. *Crash Bandicoot 2* - PS
5. *Metal Gear Solid* - PS



6. *Zelda 64* - N64
7. *SF vs. X-Men* - SS
8. *Gex 2* - PS/N64
9. *FF Tactics* - PS
10. *Yoshi's Story* - N64

GAMEFAN EDITORS' TOP TEN



1. *Dead or Alive* - SS
2. *FirePro 6 Man Scramble* - SS
3. *King of Fighters '97*- Neo
4. *Groove on Fight* - SS
5. *Puyo Puyo Sun* - SS
6. *Tomb Raider 2* - PS
7. *Persona* - PS
8. *Valis* - Genesis
9. *Silent Debuggers* - Turbo
10. *Death Tank Zwei* - SS



1. *Resident Evil 2* - PS
2. *Bloody Roar* - PS
3. *Nightmare Creatures* - PS
4. *MediEvil* - PS
5. *Quake* - Saturn
6. *Gran Turismo* - PS
7. *Tomb Raider 2* - PS
8. *Death Tank Zwei* - Saturn
9. *Tekken 3* - Arcade
10. *Diddy Kong Racing* - N64



1. *Nightmare Creatures* - PS
2. *C&C Red Alert* - PS
3. *Abe's Odyssey* - PS
4. *Tomb Raider 2* - PS
5. *Crash Bandicoot 2* - PS
6. *Final Fantasy Int'l.* - PS
7. *Ace Combat 2 (analog!!)* - PS
8. *Bloody Roar* - PS (Import)
9. *Street Fighter EX+α* - PS
10. *FF Tactics* - PS



1. *Silhouette Mirage* - Saturn
2. *One* - PS
3. *Panzer Azel* - SS
4. *Bio Hazard 2* - PS
5. *Bushido Blade* - PS
6. *X-Men vs. SF* - SS (Import)
7. *FF Tactics* - SS
8. *Klonoa* - PS
9. *Grandia* - SS
10. *Christmas NiGHTS* - SS



1. *Skull Monkeys* - PS
2. *Duke Nukem 3D* - SS
3. *FF Tactics* - PS
4. *Monster Rancher* - PS
5. *Castlevania SOTN* - PS
6. *Shienryu* - SS (Import)
7. *X-Men vs. SF* - SS (Import)
8. *Bloody Roar* - PS (Import)
9. *C&C Red Alert* - PS
10. *Ultima IV* - Commodore 64



1. *Diddy Kong Racing* - N64
2. *Resident Evil 2* - PS
3. *Crash Bandicoot 2* - PS
4. *Castlevania SOTN* - PS
5. *Armored Core* - PS
6. *Bloody Roar* - PS
7. *Silhouette Mirage* - SS
8. *Intelligent Qube* - PS
9. *Dead or Alive* - SS
10. *Puyolin* - Keychain

WIN

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All you have to do to enter the drawing is write down a list of your top 10 favorite games and the 10 games you want the most that aren't out yet, on a piece of paper or a postcard then send them to: GAMEFAN TOP TEN, 5137 Clareton Dr., Suite 210 Agoura Hills, CA 91301

First Prize: Pocket GameBoy

Second Prize: Your choice of one of the Picks of the Month in Viewpoint.

Third Prize: A FREE year of GameFan! The best magazine in the universe!

Congratulations to last month's winners:

First Prize:	Second Prize:	Third Prize:
Ernest Spartak, Lincoln, NE	'Skilliam' Lewis, San Francisco, CA	Archie Bendak, New York, NY

Drawing is limited to One (1) entry per person per month. Drawings will be held on the 21st of each month. The three (3) winners will be notified by mail and listed on this page. For a complete list of rules and regulations write: GameFan Top Ten with self addressed & stamped envelope.

DEVELOPER'S TOP TEN

This Month's Guest: David D. Grijns, Director: Nightmare Creatures - Activision

1. *Rescue Raiders* - Apple IIe
2. *Xenon 2 Megablast* - Amiga
3. *Parasite Eve* - PS
4. *Bloody Roar* - PS/Arcade
5. Einhander - PS
6. *Twisted Metal 2* - PS
7. *Nightmare Creatures* - PS
8. *Gran Turismo* - PS
9. *Quake 2* - PC
10. *Metal Gear Solid* - PS



Jet Moto 2

Choose your





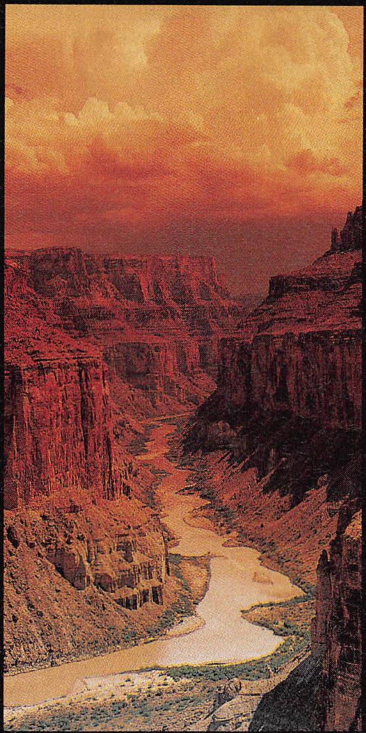
With ten treacherous new tracks, Jet Moto® 2 isn't just a more intense, all-terrain racing game, it's a virtual graveyard. This time, you'll race through molten lava, splash down a waterfall and even maneuver your way over a broken-down roller coaster. You'll feel every bump,

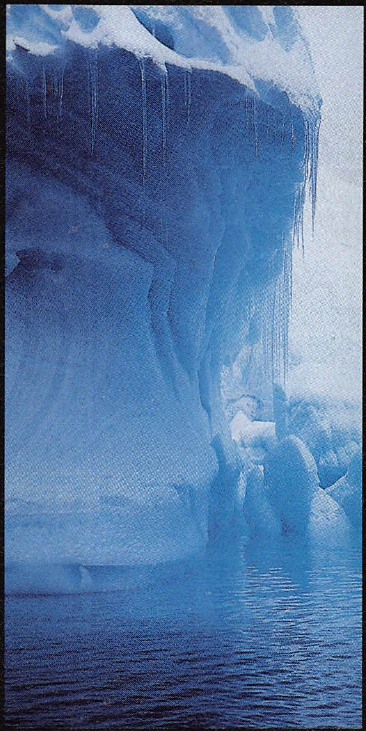




PlayStation™

burial plot





you'll catch more air, you'll even nail 360-degree corkscrews. Plus, you can challenge a friend on the two-player split screen. All you need is a PlayStation™ and a death wish. Because if you're lucky, you'll reach the checkered flag. Or you'll die trying.

KIDS TO ADULTS
K-A
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB



VIEWPOINT

Legend
Graphics
Control
Play mechanics
Music
Originality



E. STORM REUBUS KNIGHTMARE ECM HAMBLETON GLITCH SHIDOSHI SUBSTANCE D SHIN ROX ENQUIRER



ONE
GAME OF THE MONTH!



Armored Core
PlayStation
SCEA
Mech/Sim

The best mech 'sim' of all time has arrived on the PlayStation. Featuring super-hot mech combat and countless ways to configure your mech this game destroys all others before it. A fantastic number of missions, tons of enemy mechs, and a really cool storyline make this a quality product through and through. The only negative that I can find is the two-player fighting mode is weak, not even coming close to the mighty *Virtual On*. That's a minor gripe, though, as this game rips. Break that piggy bank!

G 9 C 7 P 9 M 6 O 9 **92**

Mech fans should be in heaven with *Armored Core*. With literally thousands of unique mechs that can be assembled from the diverse selection of parts, *AC* allows you the thrill of designing your own awesome mech and taking on a friend in either link up or split screen mode. While this is where the majority of the fun in *AC* resides, the one player, mission based game (which you'll need to play in order to build up credits with which to build the mother of all mechs) also provides its fair share of fun and action. The graphics are solid and extra features such as the ability to custom color your mech and even design little emblems for them take *Armored Core* from good to great.

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 8 O 8 **89**

I'm frankly really rather excited, not to mention frothing at the opportunity to waffle praise for this most mighty of Mech simulations. Not only are the levels immense (one of the last zones of all has you climbing a superstructure that is mind-bogglingly big), but the actual feeling of being strapped into a huge clanking hyper dreadnaught is more than adequately simulated. Not only does this look pretty, but it plays frighteningly well, with each mission more exciting than the last. And although not quite as droolsome as multi-player *Virtual On*, two player fighting is wicked fun! Buy it!

G 9 C 8 P 9 M 8 O 8 **92**



Auto Destruct
PlayStation
EA
Combat Driving

This slightly uninspired game from Neurostone resembles a curious hybrid of *Die Hard Trilogy* (similar mushroom explosions and targeting circles), *Felony 11-79* (the feeling of driving through a city), and *Twisted Metal* (the shooting). And I wish I could say that it resembles the movie Death Race 2000, but the goofy and hilarious bloody tire tracks from the preview version are no longer in the game. Oh well, what's left is a decent but forgettable romp through a city being terrorized by a religious cult. It's fun for a little while, chasing down evil doers and blowing them sky high, but the shallow nature of the repetitive gameplay soon becomes apparent and you'll probably find yourself reaching for something more engaging and more refined. It's okay.

G 7 C 7 P 7 M 7 O 7 **75**

Drive, shoot. Drive, find item, shoot. Drive, get message from headquarters, shoot. Drive, shoot, get message, find item, cause *Die Hard Trilogy*-type atomic explosion, SHOOT! Yep, dive into *Auto Destruct*, a land of driving and shooting, a land of constant repetition, and you'll probably have the same to report. Again, like so many other me-too games out there now, *AD* isn't outright bad. No way. It's just missing a ton of essential replay elements, like character, for one thing, and a much needed dose of variety. Playing the same damn cityscape over and over again, despite the zippy 'lil engine and cool controls, just 'aint my thing.

G 7 C 8 P 6 M 6 O 6 **69**

The best way to describe this is a *Twisted Metal*'s more strategic cousin. Take to the streets in a car armed to the teeth, while blowing up other cars and running down pedestrians (always fun in my opinion). And while you're doing all that fun stuff, you also have to attain certain mission objectives in each level. A pretty fun game, but certainly nothing to get worked into a lather over. Oh, and the female 'co-pilot' needs to go—her incessant chatter almost sent me over the edge more than once. The best way to describe this game is if you see it for $19.99 you'd pick it up; that's it in a nutshell.

G 7 C 7 P 8 M 6 O 7 **75**



Bug Riders
PlayStation
GT Interactive
Racing

While there's nothin' more tasty than a couple of fried cockroaches, I draw the line at clambering onto giant winged insects and whoopin' and hollerin' at them as they chug around a track. Especially when the track doesn't allow any freedom of movement. Crazed control coupled with appalling play mechanics ("over the ridge, okay, I'll turn right... nope, I was dragged left instead...") make *Bug Riders* a true chore to play. Stunningly shallow and appallingly boring. Novel idea though...

G 7 C 2 P 3 M 6 O 8 **42**

Bug Riders - bad concept, bad game. How can you have an 'on-rails' racer that actually keeps you on course whether you like it or not?! It all comes down to just avoiding stuff and cropping your bug. The graphics are pretty average, considering you're on-rails, and the gameplay is way below par. It looks like the developers spent all their money on the CG intro and then two weeks from deadline remembered they needed a game to go with it. Avoid.

G 6 C 6 P 5 M 7 O 6 **55**

Well, I'm afraid I'm forced to agree with Knightmare and Chief on this one, with one exception: the design. I love the characters and the overall design of this game, but not one other aspect of *Bug Riders* matches the ingenuity of its design elements. The bugs you're riding are pulled along the tracks, making the control abhorrent, and even the weapons sort of "bend" round the turns. Very odd. The graphics are decent, but even gorgeous graphics wouldn't have saved this game. Squish it out of your mind...

G 7 C 4 P 4 M 5 O 7 **52**



C&C Red Alert
PlayStation
Virgin
Real-time Strategy

C&C was a phenomenal game, and believe it or not, the sequel is leaps and bounds better. Taking all of the great gameplay that made the first so addictive and then adding in more units, mouse support, and even more gratuitous FMV, this game has it all. Heck, some people here wasted an entire day playing this in link mode (not me though, I had work to do..heh). Not much more needs to be said, other than this is the best real-time strategy game available on consoles and any and all fans (as well as those new to the genre) need this.

G 7 C 9 P 9 M 7 O 9 **94**

The one genre that PC gamers have had all to themselves (up until recently) is the overhead action/strategy sim. But now console owners are finally getting a taste of the action with *C&C*, *Warcraft 2*, *Warhammer* and *C&C*'s superior sequel, *Red Alert*. *Red Alert* is a worth successor to *C&C* with a great premise, detailed graphics, amusing sound, oodles of awesome FMV and above all, panic inducing gameplay. Resource management has never been so much fun! This conversion is missing some of the animation of the PC original, but other than that, it's spot on. Cool!

G 8 C 8 P 9 M 8 O 8 **92**

Even if moving little soldiers, tanks and other assorted armored divisions isn't your idea of a fun evening, *Red Alert* will change that for a number of reasons. Firstly, there's the two cool campaigns to play (featuring some shockingly cunning missions) both as the Allies and the Ruskies, then there's the infamous link-up mode which allows mad and frantic battles of epic proportions to be waged. There's nothing like trundling into your opponent's base with a squadron of tanks and laying waste to his barracks!! Hear the marvellous sampled speech!! Clap as your lead tank squishes a rival infantryman! Groan as an airstrike cripples your panzer divisions! Thoroughly entertaining and well worth buying whatever your gaming disposition!

G 7 C 8 P 10 M 8 O 9 **93**



Critical Depth
PlayStation
GT Interactive
Combat Swimming

Why the hell is everybody at GF so divided when it comes to *Critical Depth*? Many say it's been done before...something to the effect of "*Twisted Metal* underwater". Others claim it simply can't hold your interest for more than an hour at a time. Let me set it straight for ya: *Critical Depth* is fun! You got your two-player mode, competitive or co-op, and the intensity level is definitely set on 'stun'... uh, just like *Twisted Metal*. Unfortunately this engine, the *TM* engine, is really tired and wracked with seams and break-up. As for the replay value issue, well, if CD rocks your world (i.e., ECM) within the first half-hour, you'll probably love it forever.

G 7 C 7 P 7 M 7 O 5 **70**

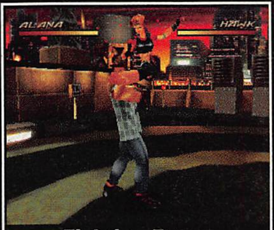
Singletrac submerges the *Twisted Metal* engine for some undersea thrills. Seeing as how the *TM* series has sold insanely well, I have little need to spout the virtues of this game, but I will anyway . Intense *TM*-style gameplay underwater, with just a touch of *Warhawk*, makes this game another guaranteed best-seller.. My only gripe would be that it's time for a new engine, or tighten up the current one as it's starting to show its age. The glitchy, warping textures are getting tired and it's time for a higher-res. Don't get me wrong, though, I'll be on line for this one the second it hits the shelves.

G 7 C 8 P 9 M 7 O 8 **88**

I haven't been overly impressed with a SingleTrac game since I first laid my hands on *Warhawk* back during the PS' US infancy, and *Critical Depth* does little to change that notion. For starters, SingleTrac's engine is starting to show its age with a decided roughness to the visuals that is less forgivable today than even a year ago. And as for the way the game plays, I'm not too big a fan of that either. You've got to collect these pods, and trying to hold onto your them while the enemy subs attack you from all angles is an exercise in frustration. You've got temporary shields and the sloppy feeling control and inability to move freely through the underwater environment really hurts what could have been a much better and more satisfying underwater shooter.

G 7 C 7 P 6 M 7 O 8 **73**


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Fighting Force
PlayStation
Eidos
Action/Fighting

In a single, ugly word: disappointing. After years of expectations and figuring on the next coming of *Streets of Rage 2*, all I can say is I'm saddened. Bland gameplay, poor camera angles, and much too easy, it just isn't the game it could have been. Maybe they ran over deadline and had to leave out all the cool throws and combos, but I don't think so. The unresponsive controls just killed what little enthusiasm I had for this title. In fact the only plus is the two player mode, although that's little compensation for what has happened here. Better luck next time, Core.

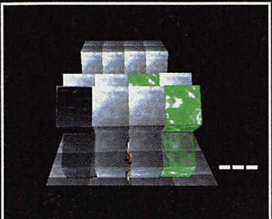
G 8 C 6 P 6 M 6 O 4 **65**

I had extremely high hopes for *Fighting Force* and they've been dashed on the rocks of mediocrity. With such a good looking engine, and promises of involved game mechanics, it seemed like Core were on track for the definitive 32-bit wandering 3D beat-'em-up. But alas, the end result is a tedious, mindless mechanical husk which not even die-hard scrolling beat-'em-up veterans will enjoy. I don't mind the lack of moves (*Final Fight* had even less) but unlike Capcom's seminal classic, *Fighting Force* just isn't fun. You get no satisfaction from hitting people. I'll stick with *Die Hard Arcade* thank you very much.

G 8 C 7 P 6 M 8 O 5 **70**

Ahh...lookie what we got here! It's disappointment! It's failure to listen to the press' advice! It's lack of gameplay! It's PAINFUL! And I feel victimized, what with the glowing previews I've given *FF* in the past. You see, Core failed to deliver the combos they promised, or the cinematic elements they frequently described. Now we're left with only one big plus: A fantastic, smooth, beautifully lit engine. Take a look at this game and drool with me. Play this game and sigh with me. Not enough ways to pummel people, dammit! *FF* is still great as a two-player beat-'em-up, with good length and plenty to smash, but in the end it's just wasted potential.

G 9 C 8 P 6 M 7 O 9 **77**



Intelligent Qube
PlayStation
SCEA
Puzzle

Now, the puzzle game that sold like gangbusters in Japan comes stateside, ready to entrance a whole new nation of gamers. While it doesn't actually test your I.Q.(a scary thought for most, eh?), *Intelligent Qube* will certainly give your lump of grey matter a good work out as you attempt to clear the flopping blocks from the desolate cube plane in as few moves as possible. Like any good puzzle game, the addiction factor is high, underscored by a scrumptious symphonic soundtrack. It's an epic, beautiful thing and is some of the best puzzle game music ever. *IQ* may not be big on visual variety, but you won't care once you've been sucked in by its unique and enthralling gameplay.

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 9 O 9 **87**

This is one of the best new puzzle games that has been released in many years. The control is a little awkward but once mastered IQ is really addictive. The music is really amazing in terms of quality and originality and the levels are some of the hardest 3D puzzle levels ever. My only complaint is that they didn't put in a replay feature when you beat the round but I guess that's what the sequel is for...

G 9 C 7 P 8 M 10 O 10 **88**

Intelligent Qube has one major flaw - it may not be American-gamer friendly. To really enjoy this game, you'll have to spend a lot of time with it, and I'm afraid many players will drop off from boredom before they have the chance to get into *IQ*. If you are indeed willing to put out the effort, you'll find a challenging little puzzle game here. It's easy to clear all of the blocks, but can do it like a pro? Also, I've got to wonder what epic movie or video game *IQ*'s music score escaped from - hearing a soundtrack like that come from a puzzle game is quite shocking (but refreshing).

G 7 C 8 P 8 M 10 O 8 **85**



Monster Rancher
PlayStation
Tecmo
Life Sim

This game is great! If I've said it once I've said it a thousand times: I can't believe I love, let alone like, this game. It's just so much fun raisin' your little beastie from hell and having him go tooth to claw against other monsters for money and status. This is one of my favorite games this year, and I still can't believe after two months I am still playing this freakin' thing; this from a person that got disgusted with Tamagotchis after about an hour of having one. Definitely a must-buy this Christmas along with all the others I've already mentioned. Time to rob a bank, methinks.

G 8 C 7 P 9 M 8 O 9 **95**

Now this is something I can get into between bouts of *Street Fighter* and wrestling. Take a harmless looking little critter and turn it into a death machine, just like me (*cue flexing - Ed*) RESPECT! Tecmo harnesses some real super power with this title showing there is room for more Tamagotchi-inspired lunacy in the world. This game rocks and makes for a terrific stocking stuffer. I can't recommend this title highly enough, and I totally agree with ECM across the board on this one!

G 8 C 7 P 9 M 7 O 9 **93**

After enjoying hours of Monster Ranching on the 'ole farm-stead last night I have one thing to say: What a cool game! I'm one of the few GF staff writers who DIDN'T go through the Tamagotchi phase, knowing that a screaming key-chain probably wouldn't stay in one piece for too long in my world. If my beast complains in *MR*, however, I just toss it into the ring for a good beating with fellow kindred freaks. It even grows, gets smarter, and gains skill through labor on the farm. The engine's good, the music is great, and the entire concept is fresh and exciting. First *Deception* and now this...never underestimate Tecmo's shocking originality!.

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 8 O 10 **85**



One
PlayStation
ASC
Action/Adventure

Remember the feeling you got the first time you played *Contra IV* on SNES? Or *Gunstar Heroes* on the Genesis? Remember the awe, the adrenaline rush, the sheer delight of seeing state-of-the-art graphics and perfectly measured gameplay coming together? Well, get ready to feel it again baby, because One is the 32-bit equivalent of those classic action games! Visual Concepts have come from literally out of nowhere to provide one of the most graphically stunning, thumb blistering action/platform experiences of all time. The rage meter provides a unique non-stop dynamic to the blasting that leaves you both physically and mentally drained after a session. Buy this game.

G 10 C 9 P 9 M 7 O 9 **96**

Game of the month? At the very least! ASC Games and VIsual Concepts get together to bring you a visual extravaganza the likes of which have NEVER been seen. Remember how I raved about the graphics in *Colony Wars* last issue? Well, this game utterly crushes it. Amazingly enough, it also has the play to back up it up. In fact, I'm itching to get back on it as soon as Knightmare grows weary of getting his ass kicked in (he has no skill, you see). Sadly, I can't go in-depth as I'd like, as the gent to my right gets to review it <grumble>. Despite his lack of prowess, Knightmare has this one nailed—it's the gameplay of the classics melded with 32-bit power. Buy this game, now.

G 10 C 9 P 9 M 9 O 9 **98**

Holy crap, would you look at those graphics?! There's a ton of polygons, the design is rich and complex, and 30 fps,under all kinds of stress, just refuses to quit. Or how about that lighting, and those fine explosions? Dazzling! Then it hits me: *ONE* also plays really, really well. Your character is a joy to control, and his selection of moves makes him one of the most controllable 3D action characters ever. This comes in handy when you're dealing with HUGE levels and insane enemy hordes that NEVER stop the attack. Most importantly, ONE is terribly fun, and it's tough to crack so you'll be back for more kills, more secrets, and more beautiful sights. Action shooters are back!!!

G 10 C 9 P 9 M 8 O 10 **97**



Red Asphalt
PlayStation
Interplay
Combat Racing

Here's a tough one. Since I'm writing this from my home office, I have no idea what the scores around me are like. I kicked this hellacious racer's evil arse after much examination of the games twitchy initial nuances. As soon as you become accustomed to the on screen madness in *RA* it becomes an exercise in precision racing and inflicting pain, and if I do say so myself, is quite invigorating. The engine is amazing, the production values are super high, and the architecture looks like Ridley Scott meets Clive Barker. Do it up.

G 9 C 8 P 9 M 9 O 9 **89**

Well it took 2 years, millions of dollars, and a name change but it's finally here. Was it worth the wait? Well, it possesses one of the most blazing racing engines I've ever seen on the PS, with huge polygonal environments and a boatload of cool lighting effects. Alas, the gameplay is sadly average at best. It just gets extremely repetitive and monotonous after a couple hours of play. The annoying gameplay (where being farther back in the pack is a plus) and the very touchy control for the first few hours will dissuade all but the most hardcore. A rental, without question, although I'm afraid that's as far as it goes.

G 9 C 7 P 7 M 6 O 8 **73**

So *Rock'n'Roll Racing 3D* finally makes an appearance, albeit under the name of *Red Ashpalt*. And while the game bears many similarities to its 16-bit pseudo-predecessor, I'm afraid it looses the sheer simple addictiveness of the SNES classic. The engine isn't the problem: the frame rate is impressive with detailed and imaginative futuristic environments and some very pretty lighting effects. No, I'm afraid things have gone wrong in the gameplay department. The control is awkward and frustrating, even after you've upgraded your car parts, and the racing action gets quite monotonous. Race/combat fans may want to check it out though.

G 8 C 6 P 7 M 7 O 6 **75**



Spawn
PlayStation
SCEA
Action/Adventure

To be completely honest (is their any other way?) I was really hoping for a hand drawn game when Spawn met gamedom. When I think Spawn, I think McFarlane, and when I think McFarlane, I think detail. The polygonal Spawn is a hulky chunk of polys who clumsily makes his way through a sparse yet doable adventure/fighting fest. Some puzzle elements keep it from going completely wrong and the cape's a nice touch in the fights, but overall *Spawn* the game doesn't live up to the figures, the comics, or the movie. Spawn Toys-A, Spawn Comics-A+ Spawn Movie B+. Spawn The Eternal...

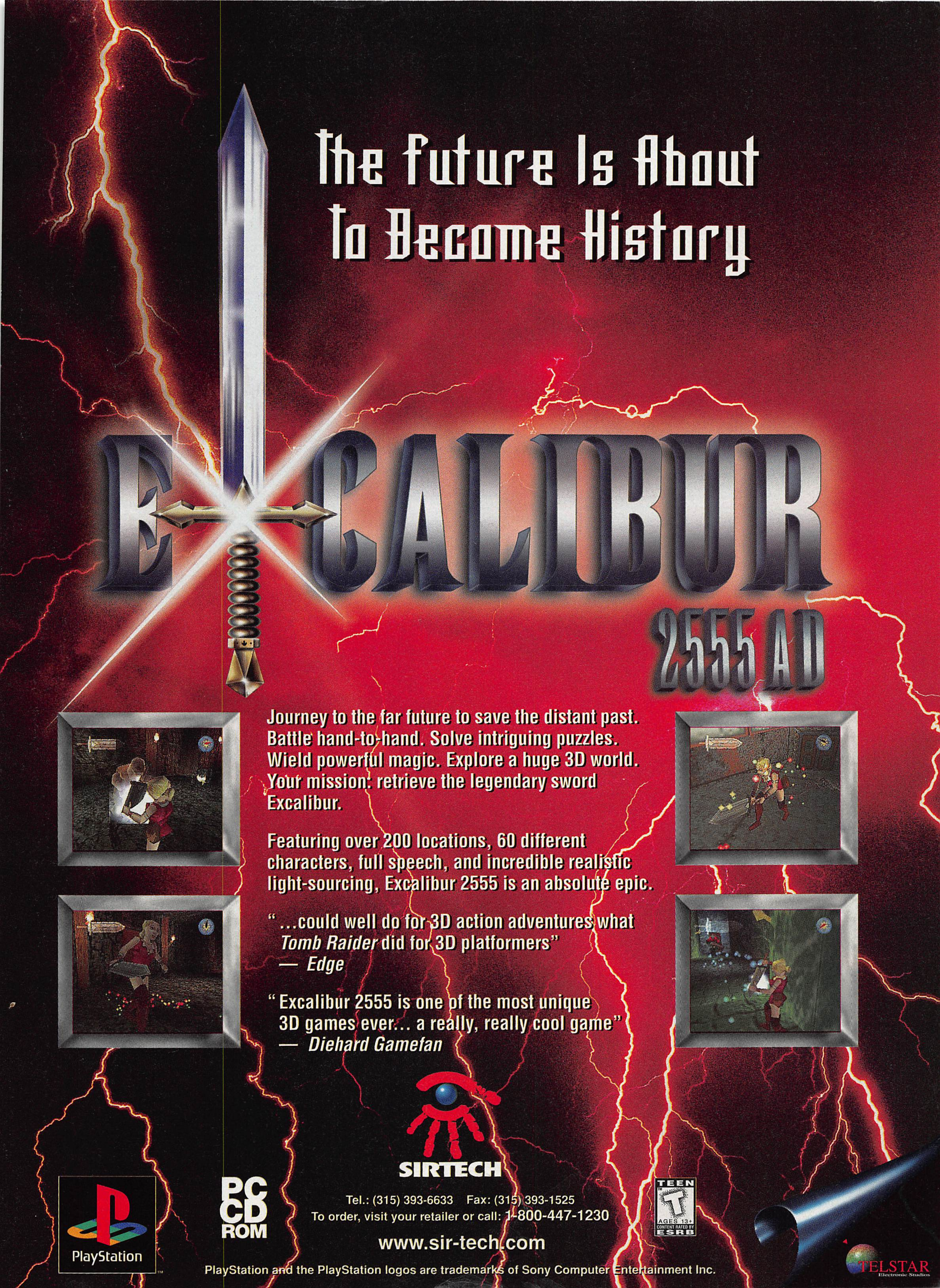
G 7 C 8 P 7 M 7 O 8 **78**

Arguably, Todd McFarlane is a fantastic artist (I'm not so sure), he does make incredible toys, and the movie had some really nice SFX. However, something has gone terribly wrong here. Sine when did Spawn put on about 150 lbs of muscle and get exposed to some Gamma rays? He now looks more like the Hulk in Spawn's outfit than anything else. The gameplay itself is rather clunky and the *VF* wannabe fighting doesn't come off that well. Granted, some of the fighting moves are cool (tear off his arm!), and there is some nice lighting, but this is only for die-hard Spawn fans.

G 7 C 7 P 5 M 7 O 8 **60**

If you look past the license, *Spawn* is an acceptable 3D adventure with chunky graphics, pretty lighting and interactive environments. The combat encounter system is poorly handled (get 'near' an enemy and the backgrounds disappear to allow for Spawn's cape & chains) although the actual fighting action is decent, once you learn the moves and combos. Spawn fans will recognize a lot of the characters and environments from the comic book, though they will also lament the loss of Spawn's cape and chains as he explores the levels. Having them magically appear during battle is an unacceptable compromise in my opinion. For 80% of the game the guy just doesn't look like Spawn! Can you imagine Batman without a cape? Otherwise, not bad.

G 8 C 7 P 7 M 8 O 7 **79**


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Tomb Raider 2
PlayStation
Eidos
Action/Adventure

The first time you experienced *Tomb Raider* you were undoubtedly completely awestruck. A shapely vixen in a huge 3D adventure? C'mon, who wasn't?! The second time out, that initial feeling will evade you, but in its place you'll find solace in much of the same... but better. Although the textures are still pixely, the real time lighting adds a majestic new dimension and the models themselves are more detailed. Lara is animated quite a bit better (no more pointers) and her change of wardrobe really ads to the realism. Added complexity, cavernous gameplay beyond the first, more enemies, and vehicles, vehicles, vehicles!, make it great. Lets do this every year!!

G 9 · C 9 · P 10 · M 7 · O 8 — **98**

Core obviously realized that if they wanted *Tomb Raider 2* to have the same impact as the original, they were going to have to go that extra mile with the sequel. And they have, big time. Everything about *TR2* is an improvement over the original. The graphics, the control, the sound, the music, and perhaps most importantly, the level design. You will not see levels this big or a quest this epic in any other 3D action game.The sheer scale of *TR2* is staggering. Plus you get vehicles to ride, new weapons to shoot (the combat is still basic) and just like the PC, you can save whenever you want. Bravo Core!

G 9 · C 8 · P 9 · M 8 · O 8 — **94**

Quite possibly the biggest-selling video game of this year could be *Tomb Raider 2*, and when you sit down to enjoy a couple of levels excavation, you'll soon understand why. Firstly, all the polygon models have been improved upon (cool wafting pony tail there, missy!), although some of the enemies are a little angular. Secondly, there's a whole lot more for Miss Croft to do this time around, including ride vehicle riding and the investigation of a load of all-new zones. Of course the gameplay's still as epicly fraught as ever and the fighting's a lot more frequent (but still a little too basic for my tastes), but when taken as a whole package, Core's managed another monumental achievement. And Lara's butler's just the coolest! Top wheeze! Where's me scones?! (Special kudos go to Gary Harrod of Station magazine for the *TR2* screenshots - check 'em out; they're legendary!)

G 9 · C 8 · P 10 · M 9 · O 6 — **96**



Automobili Lamborghini
Nintendo 64
Titus
Racing

A more beautiful racer you'll not find. At times *AL64* looks so good that it's almost as if Titus are reaching beyond the system's already vast boundaries. Although initially you can choose only one from three 'ghinis, once you've achieved the winning goal you can feast on the entire showroom of muscle super sleds. This certainly helps in the longevity department. Also noteworthy are the tunes which I thought would suck given the attention to detail, but alas, they do not. Uno problemo... it's all a bit basic. *Daytona* & *Ridge Racer* still take course design honors but *AL64* is solid overall and definitely worth owning.

G 10 · C 8 · P 6 · M 7 · O 6 — **85**

"Mmmmm, what beautiful scenery. Watch everyone, as I zip over this ramp! Joy! Look, as a turn this hair-pin corner at 120 mph! Whoa, the back end's skidded out unrealistically and I can't regain control!! Ooops, I hit a tree! Ow, that over-the-top lens flare is dazzling me! Okay, back on track now! Over the bridge and past that country cottage... hey, didn't I see one just like that earlier in the course...?" Bottom line... don't be fooled by the graphics; this this an adequate (but no more) left-right driving game with little flair except in the graphics department. Not enough variety, and a chugging four player nightmare straight out of *Cruisin' USA* territory. Sure looks purty though... Rent this today; I'd plug my ears and play *Rush* over this, but only just!

G 10 · C 6 · P 7 · M 5 · O 6 — **82**

Yes! Another cool N64 racer. After being pleasantly surprised with *Top Gear Rally*, here's another one to keep me happily tearing up the track. Some super-tight control, no perceptible pop-up and almost no fog (!). Titus harnesses some N64 savvy with this game. In fact, it could be the best controlling racer on N64 yet. Although it's true that it can get monotonous, at least it has some decent mutliplay modes. Check this one out and get ready for Titus' next big one: *Superman*!

G 8 · C 9 · P 8 · M 7 · O 7 — **85**



Duke Nukem 64
Nintendo 64
GT Interactive
Corridor

Okay, so despite the 'Mature' rating, Big Brother Nintendo still wants to censor *Duke*? I'm against that in principal. However, what's even more DISGUSTING is that the alluring 'ladies' have now been skewered on poles with their spines torn from their bodies, and frankly, this is much more offensive to me. "*Breasts? We can't let our over 17 audience see a hooker's nipples... well, only if those boobs are obscured by her spinal column and internal organs.*" Cretins. Well done Nintendo; your ethics beggar belief; perhaps you'd care to explain to me your twisted logic (when you've finished polishing your AK-47)? However, apart from this major disgrace, the game's really rather good...

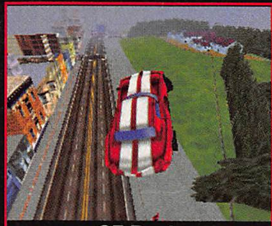
G 8 · C 8 · P 10 · M 0 · O 6 — **89**

DN for the N64 is really sweet looking. Not only because this is the best version available except for the PC version but because of the new levels and the multiplayer mode. By having this, the game really excels in terms of replay value and fun length. My main gripe is that the slowdown is disgusting; it should never do that (ever see *Golden Eye*?) and there's no music. What's up with no tunes? Overall very respectful.

G 7 · C 8 · P 7 · M 6 · O 8 — **83**

This is a great conversion of a classic corridor game. *Duke Nukem 64* retains all of the key elements that made *Duke Nukem 3D* so much fun minus one - the 'adult content'. Nintendo clearly didn't want little Johnny giving strippers money to remove their tops so snip-snip-snip went the censors and now you've got to rescue the fully clothed babes as opposed to put them out of their misery. Ok, that I can understand, but why replace the theme of 'sex' with the theme of 'guns'. That's twisted! Other than that (and the fact there's no music) *Duke 64* is quality. The action is thick and fast, the environments are realistic and incredibly interactive, and the new weapons are fun. Good stuff.

G 8 · C 9 · P 9 · M 0 · O 7 — **90**



SF Rush
Nintendo 64
Midway
Racing

A much better conversion than *Cruisin'*, *SF Rush* has a full tank when it comes to depth (hidden keys and secrets abound) and packs a noteworthy graphic punch, with good texture mapping, and clean looking cars. The frame rate is respectable and although the arcade gameplay's not my cup of tea, it's a tasty brew none the less. The ointment however has one really big fly in it... The music's just pure porn. It's as if Midway is now creating their own brand of worse than game-show quality jingles on purpose, just to see how much we can take. I've had enough.

G 7 · C 7 · P 7 · M 2 · O 7 — **70**

The main reason I like *Rush* is that it's a solid, fun racing game in the mold of Atari's classic *Hard Drivin'*. That, and it's nearly a carbon copy of the arcade version. Williams even added a hidden track and extra cars that were not present in the arcade game. The only problem is the horrific, two-channel soundtrack. Truly a decent N64 game that plays well.

G 9 · C 8 · P 7 · M 1 · O 8 — **81**

Although NOWHERE NEAR as good-looking as the Arcade version, this fun and floaty racing is great to play for the first few hours... until you're struck by the realization that; a) the sub game of collecting keys to unlock the fabled seventh track is too mind-numbingly tedious to even contemplate competing; b) there's no real control of your vehicle; and c) the music sucks so bad it'll slurp a monkey through 30 feet of garden hose. I still have nightmares about the ear-shattering 'techno' track... "whoooooaa ! whoooooaa! <dum chi dum chi dum chi dum chi> whoooooaa! whoooooaa!" ARRRGGHHH!!! Good floaty fun with music that'll cause instant tinitus. A must for deaf racing fanatics.

G 8 · C 8 · P 7 · M 0 · O 8 — **83**



Quake
Saturn
Sega
Corridor

After you get over the initial shock of seeing *Quake* running smoothly on a Saturn (and it takes a while), you have to stop and ask yourself, "so how good a single player game is *Quake* anyway?" And contrary to popular belief, it really is pretty darn good. Taking inspiration from sources as diverse as the Evil Dead movies and the Cthulhu Mythos, *Quake* provides a non-stop blast fest through dozens of stunningly intricate levels that test your reflex and co-ordination to the max. Lobotomy may indeed be programming Gods but a lot of the credit must got to id Software's original design. With multiplayer capabilities this could have been the greatest, but as is it loses out to *Duke Nukem 3D*. Still, definitely worth a look.

G 9 · C 9 · P 9 · M 9 · O 5 — **92**

After the spectacle of *Duke* last month, here's Lobotomy's second in their dynamic duo (though, with *Powerslave* I guess it's a trio). First off, the fact that this is on the SS is a testament yet again to the programming prowess of Lobotomy—they are now coding gods, tis official. Fantastic lighting to rival *GL Quake* (yes, you read that correctly) and some good (if slightly pixely) textures make for a nice graphic buffet, although it does look a little too brown and green. The NIN tunes are in there, and the only thing missing is Netlink support—nice goin', SOA. Make no mistake, this IS *Quake*—any and all Saturn fans that haven't experienced it yet NEED this. So, what am I bid on Lobotomy?

G 8 · C 8 · P 8 · M 8 · O 8 — **90**

I could spend this viewpoint telling you all about the extra lighting effects, startlingly precise control and all round marvel that Lobotomy created. I could chat about the scary musical score that out-performs any N64 hammond organ warblings out there. I could banter on about the hidden comic (mondo kewl, daddio!), the four Lobotomy levels and the fact that this is all running on a machine which most folk imagine can only handle 2D. But I won't. I'll offer a quick 'two thumbs waaay up' for the maniacal marines up at Lobotomy HQ, and then quickly rant about the ineptitude of SOA to not allow Net Link compatibility. HELLO?! Hambleton to SOA!! Engage BRAIN, please!! Of course you don't want to make the best multi-player game on the planet Net Link compatible... Yes! Good move!! I LIKE IT!! And Lobotomy already had the Net Link version up and running but you STILL cancelled??!!! BRAVO!!! <sobs>

G 9 · C 8 · P 9 · M 9 · O 7 — **93**



Dead or Alive
Saturn
Tecmo
Fighting

If you've heard about Dead or Alive, it's probably because of the game's bouncing polygon breasts. Yes, they are there, now forget about it! The game deserves to be given a fair shot without pre-determined biases. For being Tecmo's first fighting game, DoA is technically solid with perfect control, looks absolutely beautiful, yet is also extremely fun and easy to pick up. I feel no shame in not only calling DoA the best 3D fighting game on the Saturn, but one of the best non-weapon based 3D fighters around. Every time I play, I really enjoy the experience - and, isn't that what video games are all about? Oh, and P.S. - it's all about Tina.

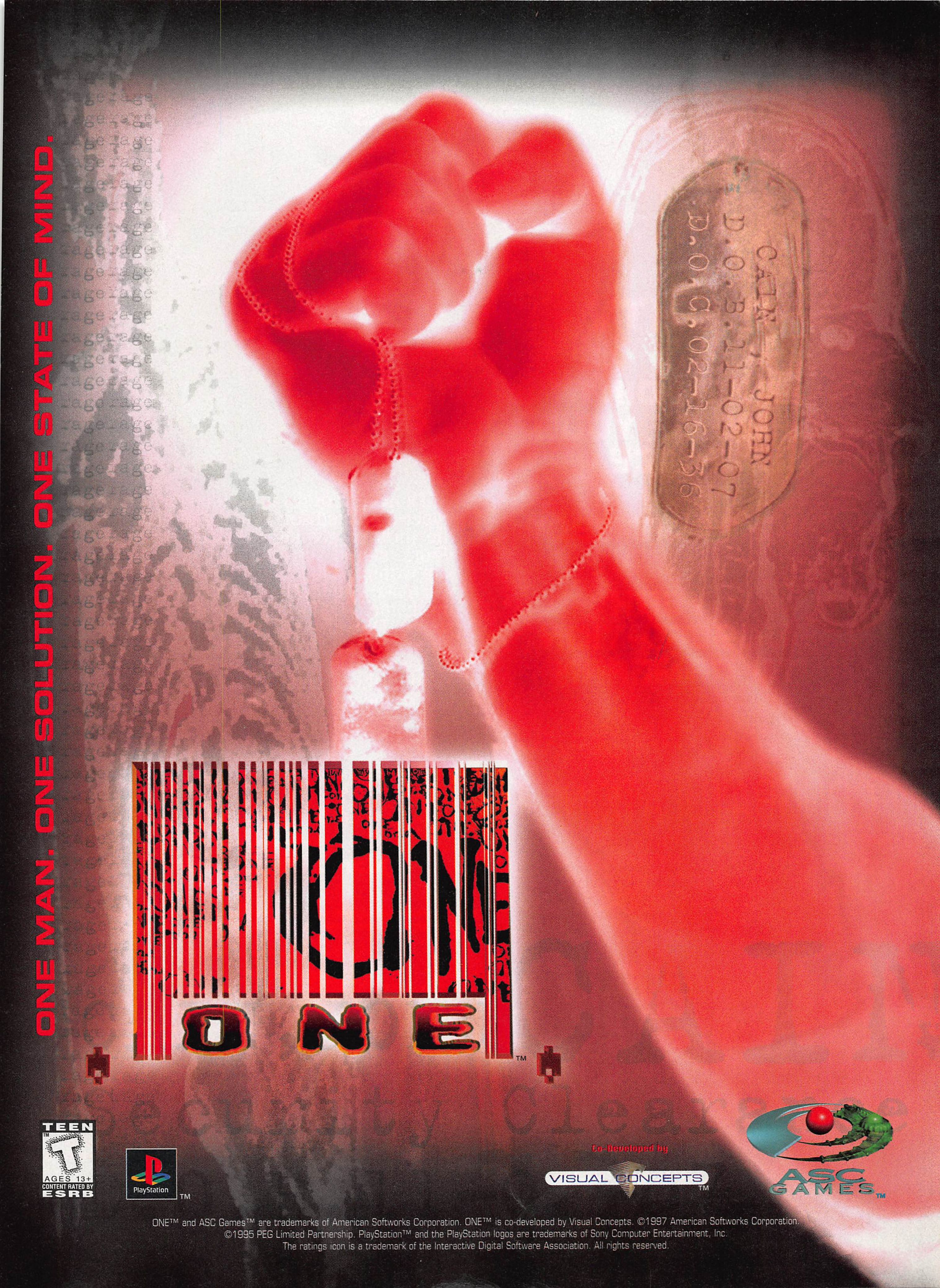
G 9 · C 9 · P 9 · M 7 · O 7 — **96**

The first and only third party title to license Sega's Model 2 technology has finally arrived on the Saturn, and you know what? It's been worth the wait. Dispelling the myth that only Sega have the skills to port a Model 2 coin-op to Saturn, Tecmo have done a cracking job with crisp, clean, hi-res graphics and super smooth animation. Yes the 3D backgrounds have been sacrificed at the alter of the polygon God but it's a small price to pay for such stunning looking characters. I like DoA. It's fast, fun (sending opponents flying in the danger zone is satisfying) and remarkably beautiful. Make sure you check it out. Hey, how about that? A DoA review and I didn't mention huge bouncing tits once! Doh! P.S - Shidoshi needs to get out more.

G 9 · C 9 · P 9 · M 8 · O 7 — **93**

Tecmo's Model 2 fighter makes its way to the Saturn in beautiful form. Using AM2's still surprisingly impressive 60 fps VF2 engine, DoA can lay claim to being one of the very best looking 3D fighters on Saturn. Not to mention the fact that the feature that brought this game most of its attention (the well endowed chests of the female fighters) is also fully intact and happily on display. Throw into the mix an interesting "counter" style of play, explosive rings, and up to nine outfits for some characters and you end up with a fun, really nice looking Saturn fighter not to be missed.

G 9 · C 9 · P 8 · M 8 · O 7 — **91**


ONE MAN. ONE SOLUTION. ONE STATE OF MIND.
CAIN, JOHN
D.O.B. 11-02-07
D.O.C. 02-16-36
ONE™
TEEN
AGES 13+
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
PlayStation™
Co-Developed by
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CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS MONTH'S WINNERS!



The mighty Monitaur seeks the finest cheats, secrets and tips known to humanity, and we need them from YOU!! We'll look over all the codes you send and award a magnificent Grand Prize every single month! Remember, no cheap codes from previously published US magazines! Winners will be drawn each month and displayed in the only place where cheaters prosper. (Current subscribers who win a subscription will receive a one-year extension.)

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Tustin, CA

second prize winner:
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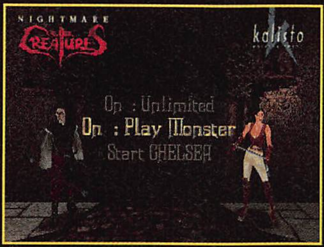
Nightmare Creatures
Cheat Menu

Cheat Menu
Jonathan Tisen, S.Pasadena, CA

Ahh...Good ol' bloody London. If you're having a hard time kicking some 'arse' in this game, at the password screen, enter the following code:

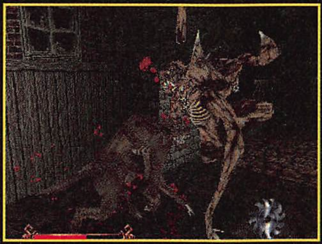
left, up, Circle, Circle, down, X, Square, Triangle.

If entered properly, before you start the game, you'll enable a cheat menu. Here you can play with infinite items, start on any level, and even play a different monster on each stage.









Diddy Kong Racing
Cheat Codes and Drumstick

Cheat codes and Drumstick
Jeese Cheek, Tustin CA

Enter the following codes at the Magic Code screen:

WHODIDTHIS - Credits
BOGUSBANANAS - speed up from bananas
VITAMINB - no banana limit
ROCKETFUEL - All Balloons Blue
OPPOSITESATTRACT - All Balloons Rainbow
TOXICOFFENDER - All Balloons Green
BODYARMOR - All Balloons Yellow
BOMBSAWAY - All Balloons Red
BYEBYEBALLOONS - Disable computer weapons
NOYELLOWSTUFF - No Bananas in Multiplayer
JOINTVENTURE - Two-player adventure
ZAPTHEZIPPERS - turnoff zippers
TIMETOLOSE - talk about AI!
DOUBLEVISION - pick same character
BLABBERMOUTH - changes horn sounds to character taunts

To play as Drumstick, find all of the amulets, the WizPig and the TT amulets. Once you've done this, squash a frog in the central area.

KNIGHTMARE'S DUKE NUKEM 3D MINI STRATEGY GUIDE

GameFan are proud to present the first ever codes for Lobotomy's superlative *Duke Nukem 3D* conversion. On this page you find several cheats, along with instructions on how to locate the Lobotomy designed secret level and unlock the awesome *Death Tank Zwei* mini-game. So without further ado...

LEVEL SELECT

On the title screen (with Start Game, etc.) press in sequence: **XYZZYXYZY**. Now when you start a game or finish a level you will be able to select your next level.

NO MONSTERS

Whilst playing pause the game and press in sequence: **ZZXXYXYXZ**. Unpause and you will enjoy a monster free trip through Duke land.

GOD MODE

Whilst playing pause the game and press in sequence: **XZZXYXYZY**. You are now invincible. Hoo-ah!



GIVE EVERYTHING.

Whilst playing pause the game and press in sequence: **ZXXZYZYXY**. You will be given all items, all weapons, and full ammo. Lock and load!



JEVONS CONTROL
(Only works with analog pad)

First make sure your analog pad is connected to the Saturn and switched to analog. Then, whilst playing, pause the game and press in sequence: **YYZ-ZXXYXZ**. Jevons Control will now be activated. The button configuration will now be as follows:

Analog Cup - Look and turn
Y - Forward
C - Backwards
Z - Strafe right
B - Strafe Left
L - Fire weapon
D-Pad left and right - Change weapon
R - Jump
X - Action
D-Pad Up and Down - Select inventory item
A - Use item



DEATH TANK ZWEI

There are two ways of unlocking *Death Tank Zwei*. The first, and easiest, is to buy Saturn *Quake*. If *Duke 3D* detects a *Quake* save game on your Saturn it will automatically unlock *Death Tank Zwei*. The second way is a little bit trickier. You must play through the entire game, from start to finish, and BREAK EVERY TOILET IN THE GAME. That includes stalls and urinals! Smash them all and after you defeat the last boss and watch the credits, *Death Tank Zwei* will appear on your title screen.



SECRET LEVEL: UREA 51

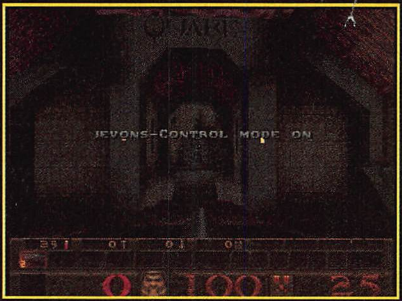
On the Fahrenheit level (the one with the fire truck) simply play through the level as per usual, and when you reach the level exit return to the area shown. One of the toilet doors will have opened, allowing access to the Lobotomy designed secret level: Urea 51





JEVONS CONTROL IN QUAKE!

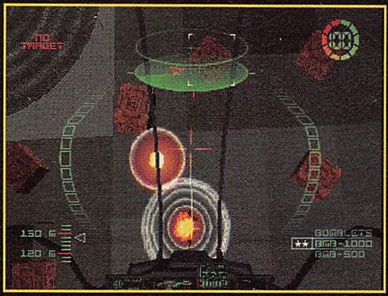
It's true. Lobotomy have also incorporated Jevons Control into Saturn *Quake*! Whilst playing the game pause and enter the options screen. Highlight 'Customize Controls' and then press in sequence **R, R, L, R, X, Y, Z, X, Y, Z**. The control scheme is very similar to *Duke 3D*'s Jevons control set-up, just without the use of the D-pad (X and A are change weapon). Groovy!



G Police

G-Police (PSX)- Unlimited Firepower
Abbie Silva, Miami, FL

Ah... to have the power of God is like... being armed to teeth with enough nukes to make a new Grand Canyon. To max out your firepower without having to earn certain weapons, at the "Weapons Description" screen, simultaneously press left, Triangle, Circle, L2, and R1. You should hear a confirmation sound if you performed the code correctly. What about your Wingmen?? Bah!!! Who needs them when you can press that red, shiny, candy-like nuke button.



Extreme G

Extreme G (N64): Codes, Extra Bikes, Hidden Track
Jonathan McFadden, St.Louis, MO

Feel that need for some real speed?? Then go to the password screen and enter "81GGD5". This code will give you both the Roach and Neon and will open up the hidden Meltdown track.

If you feel the game needs some extra tweaking, enter the following codes as names by first selecting Multiplayer, then select cup mode. Enter the following as new player names to enable some weird options:

stealth - all racers are invisible
xtreme - can you handle the speed? I don't think so!!!
ghostly - transparent racers
antigrav - to have everything backward and kerazy...
fisheye - hmm... real real long view... time to barf!
banana - better turning ability
wired- wire-frame mode
arsenal - maxed out weapons
roller- to be a rock










Introduction

Welcome. This is Nick Rox speaking. Are you a true RE fan? Did you buy RE: Director's Cut just for the RE2 demo? Have you played it to death, infinite times? I hope so. If you're this type of maniac, like myself, go out and buy a GameShark, now! Forget cheating - that's not what the next two and a half pages are about. No, I'll show you how to access a total of 34 areas not available through normal demo play, how to get about 60 items not available in the regular demo, including 17 weapons, as well as tons of other craziness.

Just to let you know, I spent over three weeks creating these codes, day and night, like a true maniac from beyond. Nothing would make me happier than if you use and abuse these codes, so read on!

Item Section

The following codes work as follows: Replace "xx" with the number of the item you wish to have, e.g. if you wanted 8 bullets you'd enter "08." For reference, "FF" will get you 255 of that item. Replace "yy" with the item numbers, which can be found on this page. "Slot 0" refers to the slot that usually contains Leon's lighter. "RE2" means the American RE2 demo, and "BH2" means the Japanese import demo. Note that the item picture will not appear in your menu, but rest assured that it's there. Just position the cursor over the slot, and you'll be able to use or examine it normally.

ITEM SLOT 0:	RE2 - 800A4C0C xxyy	BH2 - 800A5054 xxyy
ITEM SLOT 1:	RE2 - 800A4BE4 xxyy	BH2 - 800A502C xxyy
ITEM SLOT 2:	RE2 - 800A4BE8 xxyy	BH2 - 800A5030 xxyy
ITEM SLOT 3:	RE2 - 800A4BEC xxyy	BH2 - 800A5034 xxyy
ITEM SLOT 4:	RE2 - 800A4BF0 xxyy	BH2 - 800A5038 xxyy
ITEM SLOT 5:	RE2 - 800A4BF4 xxyy	BH2 - 800A503C xxyy
ITEM SLOT 6:	RE2 - 800A4BF8 xxyy	BH2 - 800A5040 xxyy
ITEM SLOT 7:	RE2 - 800A4BFC xxyy	BH2 - 800A5044 xxyy
ITEM SLOT 8:	RE2 - 800A4C00 xxyy	BH2 - 800A5048 xxyy

01-Combat Knife: Can be equipped.	02-Handgun H&K-22: Can be equipped.	03-H.Gun Browning: Cannot be equipped. Crashes.	04-Custom Handgun: Can be equipped.
05-Magnum: Can be equipped.	06-Custom Magnum: Can be equipped.	07-Shotgun: Can be equipped.	08-Custom Shotgun: Can be equipped.
09-Grenade Lnchr.: Cannot be equipped. Crashes.	0A-Grenade Lnchr.: Cannot be equipped. Crashes.	0B-Grenade Lnchr.: Cannot be equipped. Crashes.	0C-Bowgun: Cannot be equipped. Crashes.
0D-Calico 950: Cannot be equipped. Crashes.	0E-Spark Shot: (エアーテイザー 仮) Cannot be equipped. Crashes.	0F-Submachine Gun: Can be equipped.	10-Flamethrower: Cannot be equipped. Crashes.
11-Rocket Launcher: Cannot be equipped. Crashes.	12-Handgun Bullets: Can be combined with items 02 03 & 04	13-Shotgun Bullets: Can be combined with items 07 & 08	14-Magnum Bullets: Can be combined with items 05 and 06
15-Fuel: Can be combined with item 10	16-Grenades: Can cmbn. with items 22, 23, 09, 0A & 0B	17-Fire Grenades: Can be combined with items 09 0A & 0B	18-Acid Grenades: Can be combined with items 09 0A & 0B
19-S.M.G. Bullets: Can be combined with item 0F	1A-S.Shot Battery: (エアーテイザー バッテリー仮) Can be combined with item 0E	1B-Bowgun Arrows: Can be combined with item 0C	1C-Ink Ribbon: Apparently has no use in this demo.

1D-Parts A: (パーツA 仮) Can be combined with item 02	1E-Parts B: (パーツC 仮) Can be combined with item 05	1F-Parts C: Can be combined with item 07	20-First-Aid Spray: Can be used to restore health.	21-Antidote Spray: Apparently has no use in this demo.	22-Chemical A: Can be combined with items 16 and 23	23-Chemical B: Can be combined with items 16 and 22	24-Recovery Chem.: Apparently has no use in this demo.
25-Lighter: Can be used to light fire-place.	26-Lockpick: Apparently has no use in this demo.	27-Watch: Apparently has no use in this demo.	28-Valve Handle: Can be used on valve; see next pages	29-Red Jewel: Can be used in statue; see next pages	2A-Green Card Key: Can be used on computer; see below	2B-Red Card Key: Can be used on computer; see below	2C-Blue Card Key: Can be used on computer; see below
2D-Yellow Card Key: Can be used on computer; see below	2E-Serpent Stone: Apparently has no use in this demo.	2F-Jaguar Stone: Apparently has no use in this demo.	30-Blue Stone: Apparently has no use in this demo.	31-Blue Stone: Apparently has no use in this demo.	32-Eagle Stone: Apparently has no use in this demo.	33-Wood Eagle: Apparently has no use in this demo.	34-Lock Bolt A: Apparently has no use in this demo.
35-Lock Bolt B: Apparently has no use in this demo.	36-Lock Bolt C: Apparently has no use in this demo.	37-Bolt Plug: Apparently has no use in this demo.	38-Bolt Handle: Apparently has no use in this demo.	39-Detonator: Apparently has no use in this demo.	3A-Plastic Explosive: Apparently has no use in this demo.	3B-Plastic Explosive: Apparently has no use in this demo.	3C-Crank: Apparently has no use in this demo.
3D-Cabin Key: Can be used to unlock cabin.	3E-P (Private) Key: Can be used to unlock door in RPD	3F-S (Strict) Key: Can be used to unlock RPD doors	40-L (Limited) Key: Can be used to unlock RPD doors	41-D Key: Apparently has no use in this demo.	42-Small/Desk Key: Can be used to unlock desks.		

ITEM NOTES: First, many items still have their names in Japanese, and if they did I've simply literally translated them. Items in solid red can be found in the normal demo. Those with red outline cannot. The Card Keys can be used on the computer in the RPD lobby. They don't affect anything, but the message you get from looking at the computer will change. Unfortunately, it's in Japanese. What it says is "1/2/3 electrically locked door(s) have been opened," or "All electrically locked doors open." A few items' pictures hadn't been rendered yet, and instead have fanky Japanese placeholder notes. These items are 0E (note says "Air Tazer [Maybe]), 1A (note says "Air Tazer Battery [Maybe]), 1D ("Parts A [Maybe]"), and 1E ("Parts C [Maybe]", despite actually being Parts B!)

Weapons

Here's a look at the weapons that can actually be equipped; all the others crash. See the "Pseudo Weapons" area for more info.

Handgun (H&K VP70)



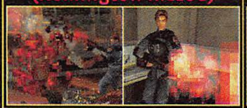
Custom Handgun (H&K VP70 Burst)



Shotgun (Remington M870 Bulldog)



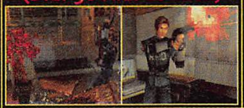
Custom Shotgun (Remington M1100)



Magnum (Desert Eagle 50 A.E.)



Custom Magnum (D.E. 50 A.E. 10-Inch)



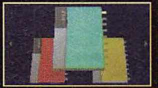
Sub-Machine Gun (Ingram MAC11)



Have All Files

These codes will allow you to begin the game with all files: RE2 - 800A4BD2 FFFF & 800A4BD0 FFFF. BH2 - 800A501A FFFF & 800A5018 FFFF. Only the first four can be read. The rest will crash, though they have some interesting names: Tyrant File, Mansion Recovery Report, etc. One of them, FAX, is entirely in English but glitchy and nearly impossible to read on a TV. Therefore I've transcribed it here.

Mr. Chris Redfield, Raccoon City Police Dept., S.T.A.R.S. division. As per your request, we have conducted our internal investigation for Mr. Brian Irons, Chief of Raccoon City Police Dept. and discovered the following information:



1) Mr.Irons has allegedly received a large sum of funds in bribes from Umbrella Inc. over the last five years. He was apparently involved in the cover up of the old mansion case along with several other incidents in which Umbrella appears to have direct responsibility.
2) Mr.Irons has been arrested under suspicion of rape on two separate counts during his years as a university student. He underwent psychiatric evaluation as a result of the charges but was released due to lack of evidence as well as his phenomenal academic standing.

As such, extreme caution is advised when dealing with him.
Jack Hamilton, Section Chief, Internal Investigations, United States Federal Police Department.

BH2 Only!

Here are two codes I made for BH2 that I couldn't find equivalents for in :

- 60 Frames Mode- 8007E66C 0000. The game will run at 60fps when there is little on-screen.
- Hear Inaccessible Voice- 8008512C 0001. Turn the GS switch on when voice plays in gunshop. When voice ends, turn off. Turn on again when next sample begins.

Pseudo Weapons

Want to use the weapons that crash the game? Enter this code: 300A1C4A 00xx for RE2, or 300A2092 00xx for BH2. Change xx to the item number of the weapon you wish to use. This makes your gun fire different weapons' bullets! Unfortunately, this code has a tendency to crash, especially weapon 11, but at least you can preview them!





Location Section, Part I (Continued Next Page!)

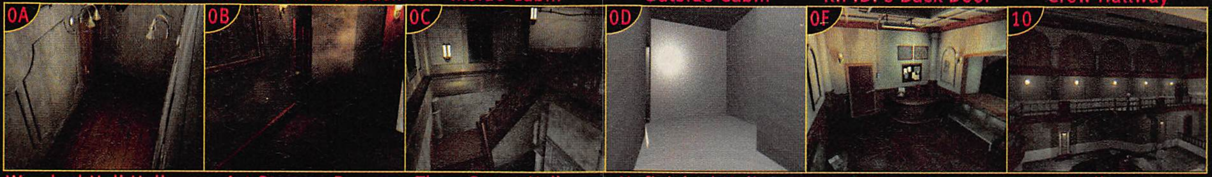
The codes listed here will allow you to warp to any location on the disc, but they're complicated and tricky to use, so please bear with me as I explain. The basic two codes are 300A49D6 00xx & 300A49D8 00yy for RE2, and 300A4E1E 00xx & 300A4E20 00yy for BH2. Replace xx with the Main Location (of which there are only three, 00, 01 and 02. All of the areas on this page are in Main Location 00.) Replace yy with the Sub Location, which can be found in the upper left-hand corner of each screen. To use these codes, start a new game. Now, the most important part: Leon will not start on screen. He will be stuck in a wall somewhere. Fixing this will require plenty of trial and error as well as the following code sequence: D00A02BC 1001, 800A1C42 0C0F, D00A02BC 1002, 800A1C42 1100. For BH2, it's D00A0704 1001, 800A208A 0C0F, D00A0704 1002, 800A202A 0C0F. This section is continued on the next page, so please don't try these until you've read all of it.



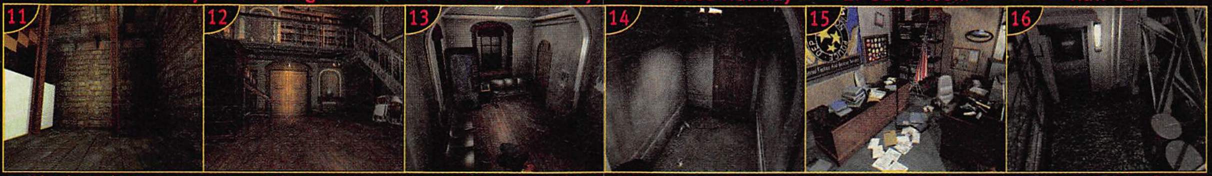
Start - Leon | Kendo Gun Shop | Outside Gun Shop | Outside R.P.D. - Front



Start - Leon R | Outside R.P.D. - Back | Inside Cabin | Outside Cabin | R.P.D.'s Back Door | Crow Hallway



Wrecked Heli Hallway | Art Storage Room | Three Statue Hallway | Unfinished Hallway | 2F Save Room | Hall - 2F



Clockwork Room | Library * | Locked Desk Hallway | S.T.A.R.S. Hallway | S.T.A.R.S. Room | R.P.D. Roof

* The Library cannot be entered in the U.S. RE 2 demo. It is only available in the Japanese BH 2 demo. This is unfortunate, as it contains amazing scenery and a really cool puzzle!

Location Section, Part 2

(continued from previous page) Make sure that the last four codes are inputted in the order they appear in the magazine, and that they are in their own code slot under the name "WALK THROUGH WALLS." After you've begun a new game with the codes input, you'll find yourself looking at a new location, but no Leon. Here's how to fix this: Press L2 and Up. This enables Leon to walk through walls. Now, run around the area, and hope Leon appears! When he does, he'll just pop in on the screen somewhere. If just his shadow appears, you must reset with L1, R1, Select and Start and try again. This is tough, but it's the only way to access these areas. When Leon finally does appear on screen, press R2 and Up to turn the Walk Through Walls off, as you can't open any doors with the code on. You'll notice that Leon's left arm will disappear when Walk Through Walls is active; this is to give you visual confirmation the code is on. His arm will reappear once your turn this code off with R2 and Up. IMPORTANT: Turn the GameShark switch off after you finally get Leon on-screen. Otherwise, any doors you open will get you right back where you started! If you don't want to go through this manic trial and error, see below for two tours that are explained in detail. But remember, there are plenty of locations that can't be entered in these tours, so I recommend you master the walk through walls technique! One general rule of the inaccessible areas is look, but don't touch. Looking at most stuff will make gibberish appear on screen and crash the game. A very, very select few will return an English response or one that won't crash the game, but it's really not worth trying. However, in the Japanese version you can look at anything! All the text is in. You can even access some puzzles in locations the Library and Large Office that will crash the US version. Buy the import!! By the way, all locations on this and the previous page in solid red can be accessed through the normal demo. All of the areas below are in Main Location 01.



00 Hall - 1F | 01 Information Desk | 02 Trashed Party Office | 03 Filing Room | 04 Bloody Hallway | 05 Boarded-Up Hall | 06 Office With Fireplace

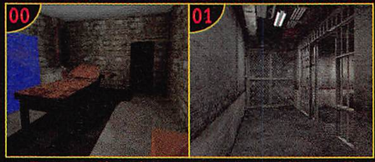


07 1F Stairs | 08 Darkroom | 09 Locker Room | 0A East Wing Hallway | 0B Large Office | 0C Dark Hallway | 0D Press Conference



0F Boarded Yellow Hall | 12 Basement | 13 Generator Room | 14 Weapons Storage | 15 Autopsy Room | 19 Basement Hallway | 1B Police Chief's Office

The two locations below are in Main Location 02.



00 Torture Chamber | 01 R.P.D. Holding Cells

The East Wing Tour

The East Wing tour is easier to manage than Leon R. Enter 00 as your Main Location and 0C as your Sub. Start a new game and press L2+Up to activate Walk Through Walls. You'll start in the shot on the lower left. Run straight until Leon pops out as shown.



Walk to the stair landing and press R2+Up to deactivate WTW. Descend the stairs. You'll now be in a hallway in the R.P.D.'s east wing. Leon will be visible on the far left on the screen. Turn 180° and run straight; Leon will pop through the wall as shown in the the sequence on the right.

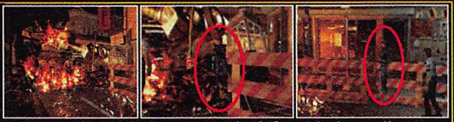
The Leon R Tour

Both Tour sections will explain exactly how to explore a large portion of the inaccessible areas. First is the Leon R tour. Leon R is a special mode you get after beating the actual RE2, but I'll explain how to access it in the demo! You will need the following Unlock All Doors and Desks code for both tours, by the way: RE2-800A4BDE FFFF, BH2 - 800A5026 FFFF. (Use this code to enter a couple cool locked rooms in the regular demo, too!) Now, use the Location Select code and input your Main Location as 00, and your Sub as 04. Also turn on the Walk Through Walls code. For this tour, bring the following items: Two Red Jewels (item code 29) and the Valve Handle (Item code 28), bring some weaponry, too, 'cause there ain't much ammo in these areas. First, begin a new game, the press L2+Up to turn on Walk Through Walls.

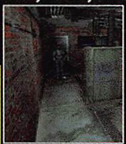
Once in the brown hallway, turn the GameShark off. You're now pretty much free to explore. I've highlighted two key areas below that are of interest. First, do not open the door at the end of the blue hallway shown below. Otherwise...



There's an invisible door here!



First you'll see the screen on the left. With the Walk Through Walls on, run TOTALLY STRAIGHT until you can hear Leon's footsteps well. Now turn to the left a bit. Run straight again. You should pop out in one of the two locations above. Now run to the main area, press R2+Up to turn WTW off, and then turn the GameShark off. Now play normally until you reach one of the areas below!

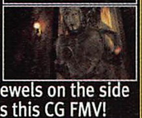


"Stop it, don't open that door!" The left door will crash in RE2, but not in BH2. Go forward instead. Use the Valve Handle in the area on the right to put out the fire.





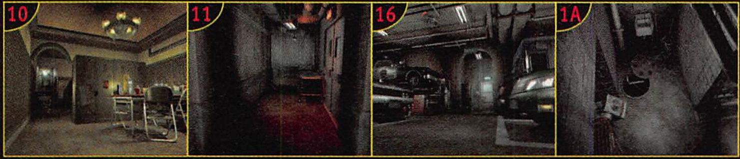
When you reach the room on the far left, go straight to the room past the helicopter. Use the red jewels on the side statues, then witness this CG FMV!



Graphics-Only Locations

Some locations that crash the game if you try and enter them, so I've devised an alternative method of viewing their graphics. Enter this code sequence: RE2 - D00A02BC 0010, 800A49D8 000C, D00A02BC 0020, 800A49D8 00xx BH2 - D00A0704 0010, 800A4E20 000C, D00A0704 0020, 800A4E20 00xx. Replace xx with one of the locations on the right. Turn on the WTW code, too. Now, hold Triangle at the title screen as you start and keep holding as the game loads. You'll be at the start of the East Wing tour. Proceed as normal until you get to the brown hall. Go to the very beginning screen of the hall and press and hold Circle as you walk forward to change views. You can now view the graphics of the location you've chosen. You can apply this code to view graphics of other locations, too - just change xx. For instance, check out the graphics of the inaccessible (in RE2) Library by starting a game with the GS off, then entering any area in Main Location 00, flipping the switch up and walking around. Try this with other locations - sometimes you'll get angles and such of rooms that can't be accessed by walking around, such as these examples from the Darkroom and Information Desk!





10 Officers' Quarters | 11 Basement Hallway | 16 R.P.D. Parking Garage | 1A R.P.D. Kennel

Sherry!

Meet Sherry, an RE2 sub-character, by taking the code sequence on the right and changing 000C in 800A49D8 000C (or 800A4E20 000C for BH2)to 0004 and changing xx to 13, then starting a new game while holding Triangle. You'll begin in the Leon R Start area. Get to the door at the end of it, then press and hold Circle. Now open the door. Enter Sherry!

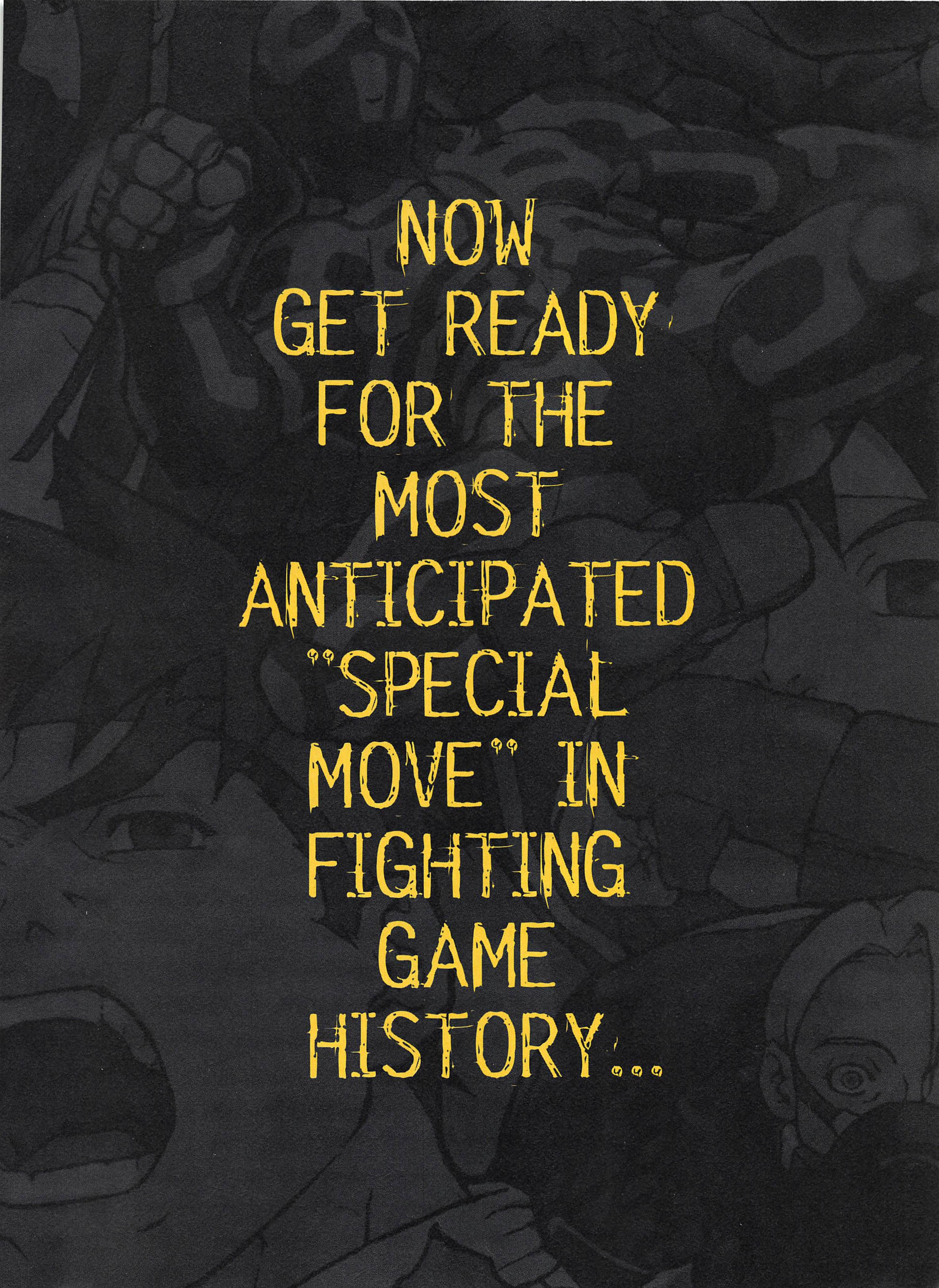


Hmm, a bunch of space left. I'll fill it by showing you some "before and afters" of the same rooms in the demo and the final game.



DEMO | FINAL | DEMO | FINAL




NOW
GET READY
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MOST
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"SPECIAL
MOVE" IN
FIGHTING
GAME
HISTORY...

STREET FIGHTER'S IN

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TEEN
T
AGES 13+
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

PlayStation



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Presenting Masters of Teräs Käsi, an all-out fighting frenzy featuring 9 *Star Wars* characters and introducing a new villain masterfully trained in the ancient martial art of teräs käsi. Battle through 9 action-packed arenas. Engage in weapon-to-weapon or hand-to-hand combat. Wield lightsabers, blasters, flame throwers and battle axes to engage in the ultimate conflict. Heck, even the Empire never struck back this hard. www.lucasarts.com

PlayStation TM

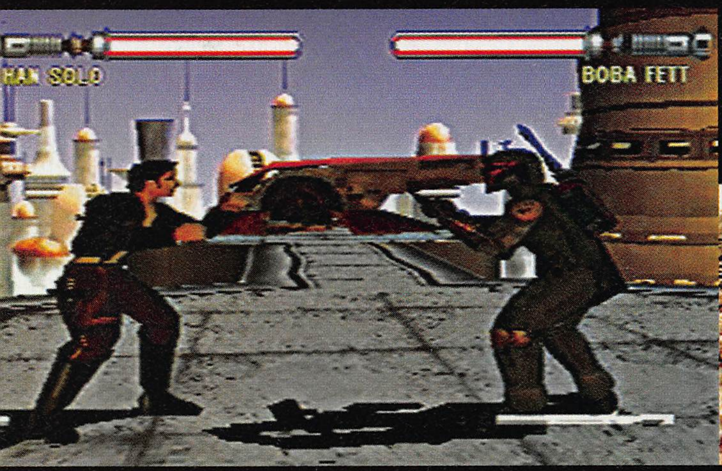
TEEN T AGES 13+ CONTENT RATED BY ESRB





THE GALAXY IS FAR, FAR AWAY. THE FIGHTING IS UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL.

STAR WARS MASTERS OF TERÄS KÄSI





QUEST 64

In this month's exclusive cover feature, E. Storm reveals the power behind what could be one of '98's biggest N64 titles. Nintendo's hungry masses wait anxiously for their first 64-bit RPG....

COULD '98'S HOTTEST ACTION RPG HAVE THQ'S NAME ON IT?







PREVIEW

NINTENDO 64

- DEVELOPER - IMAGINEER
- PUBLISHER - THQ
- FORMAT - 128 MB CART
- # OF PLAYERS - 1
- DIFFICULTY - N/A
- AVAILABLE - 1ST QTR. '98



E. STORM
Finally! The 64-bit role-playing has begun!

Throughout recent history Nintendo and their cohorts (such as Square and Enix) have been known for bringing strong role playing games to the starving masses. From *Dragon Quest* to *Zelda*, to *Final Fantasy*, Nintendo fans could always count on the "big N" to close the big deals, signing the best companies to make exclusive epics that only they could play. My, how times have changed. Thus far in the next generation console wars both Sega and Sony have put out impressive, and in some cases even epic RPGs, yet Nintendo, after over a year on sale Stateside has yet to release even one. Sega, now at their most dormant as they prepare to emerge from their 64-bit cocoon, has the beautiful *Panzer Azel* on deck as well as *Magic Knight Rayearth*. And Sony, well, behind *FF7* (which has sold nearly a million copies here already) lies *Suikoden 2*, *Xenogears*, *Parasite Eve*, *FF Tactics*, *Saga Frontier* and quite a few more full blown extravaganzas. Adding insult to injury, Nintendo, no longer the beneficiaries of Square nor Enix' exclusive wares (a harsh result of the choice to go with cart) have only one RPG (well action RPG) in the hopper (*Zelda 64*) for the seeable future, and so as a result, *Quest 64* becomes quite a pivotal title. The developers at Imagineer told me "The game is being written specifically for the Western













Journey thru bustling Towns and Villages!

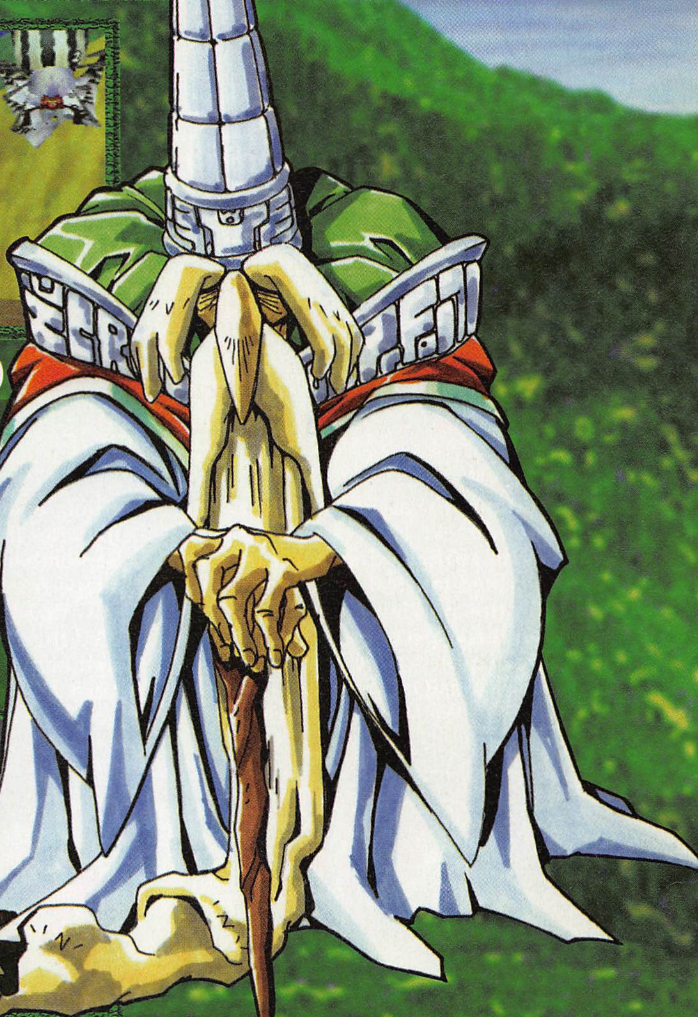
audience. The storyline, character and locales will all vary from the Japanese version". It's no wonder as the N64 has pretty much tanked thus far in Japan while here in the US, home of the K-Mart shopper Nintendo continues to enjoy stellar market share.

The playable version of *Quest* we received for this preview allowed us to skip around and view the dungeons, towns, fighting, and some character interaction but overall it's way too early to put them all together for any kind of cohesive review but here's what I can tell you based on my early glimpse:

First of all the graphics are outstanding. Visually, at least



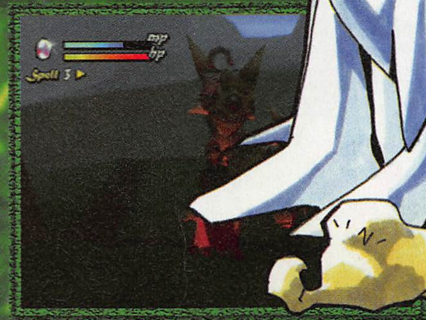


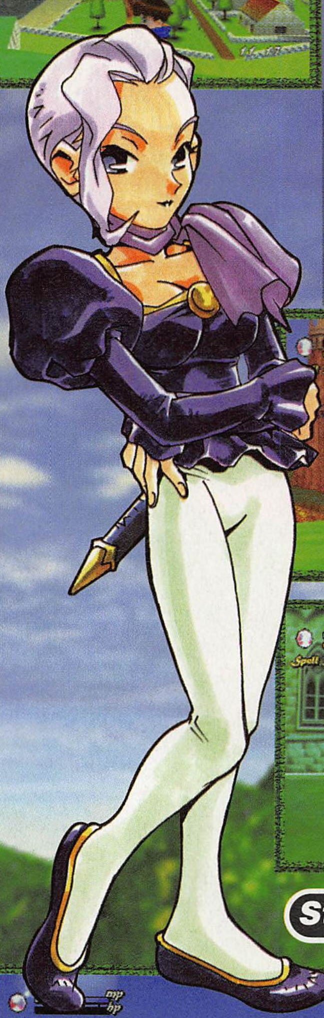


Summon magic at spectacular creatures!

in the Towns, *Quest* exhibits some of the best sights I've seen as you can wander in real time not only around but inside of dwellings as the elements outside change in a speedy sort of real time. Morning turns to day, day to sunset, sunset to dusk, and dusk to dark throughout in convincing style. As day breaks a fisherman makes his way to the shore and as the sun sets he heads back home. Children play, women converse and chimneys smoke. The fighting engine too is all-new. Between places as you travel across vast landscapes different enemies will appear depending on the landscape. You can beat them directly











with your staff (which is quite ineffective) or mix and match spells which can be cast at will as long as you've got the power on your gauge. These spells range from healing to brutal projectiles and you can run around for position freely as you fight. While not completely implemented, the fighting engine seems the perfect mix of traditional turn based and free roaming action gameplay. Another key factor is the animation. The hero especially is animated flawlessly with dozens of pivot points and a flowing cape. The villagers and enemies alike are also brimming with fluid movement. Of course no RPG is








Stunning polygon environs to gasp at!





complete without the accompaniment of an inspired soundtrack. How else can the highs and lows of an artificial drama unfurl? A mere two garbled musical selections were available for this preview so I won't even comment on this aspect except to say that the developers are quite happy with it as they express in previous Q&A sessions.
My gut feeling? Well my instincts were strong enough to send me chasing after this cover story in September (after a viewing a tape from Japan) and now that I've sampled the game first hand I must say that I can still smell a





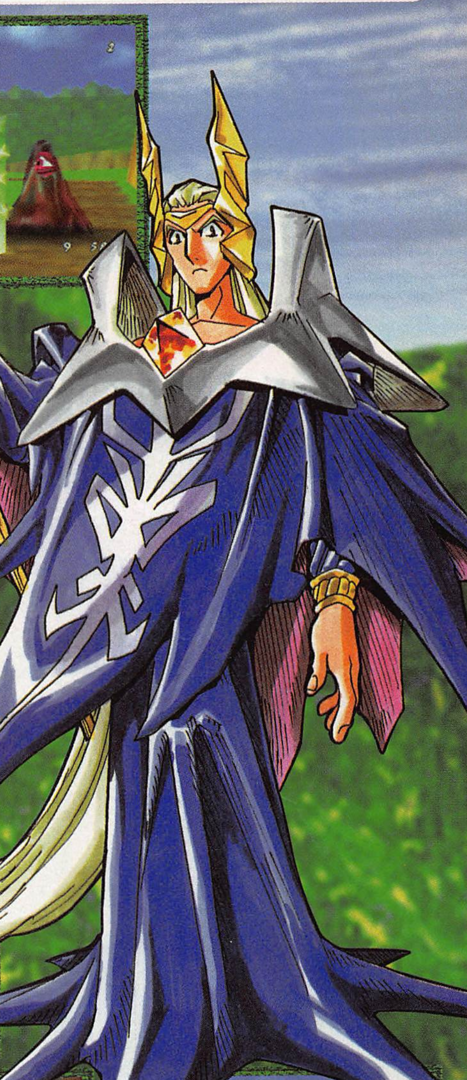






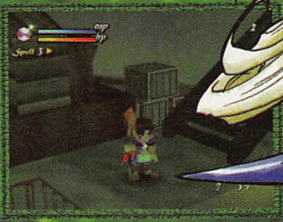

Join us as we sing praise to Nintendo and the nu 64!



hit a mile away. Of course I missed by a mile on that *Hermie Hopperhead* thing but hey, had some one stepped up two years ago I still think *Hermie 3D* would be a bun in Sony's oven. Will *Quest 64* give Link a run for his money? Well I don't think any game (on any console) can do that but I guarantee no Nintendoite will want to be without either one. *Quest 64* is part of a series (a sequel is already scheduled) as is *Zelda*, and lets not forget- the Bulky Drive is right around the corner. So Nintendo RPG lovers will undoubtedly get their fill... sooner or later. Until we quest again... ***ES***











Laugh while you frag, from Hollywood to outerspace!
Bag some aliens with over a dozen hi-tech weapons!
An all-out overload of non-stop carnage!
DUKE NUKEM: TOTAL MELTDOWN
Duke's in town. And there's nothing he hates more than an army of alien punks crowding his space. 34 levels of freak-smashing 3D mayhem should see to it. Gigantic guns! Gruesome enemies! Total interaction! And all-out devastation! Don't mess with The Man!
HE'S C
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PlayStation
RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
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Big weapons and bigger bosses for a fun-filled fragfest!
Earthquakes, exploding buildings and working subways!
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RESIDENT EVIL 2
SURVIVAL HORROR STRIKES AGAIN!

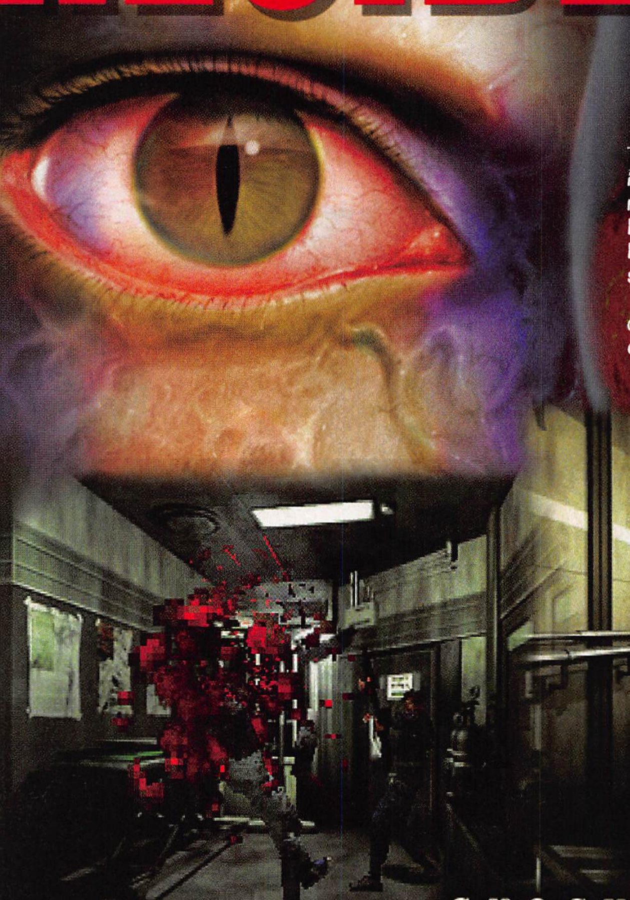
TOMB RAIDER 2
LARA CROFT IS BACK!

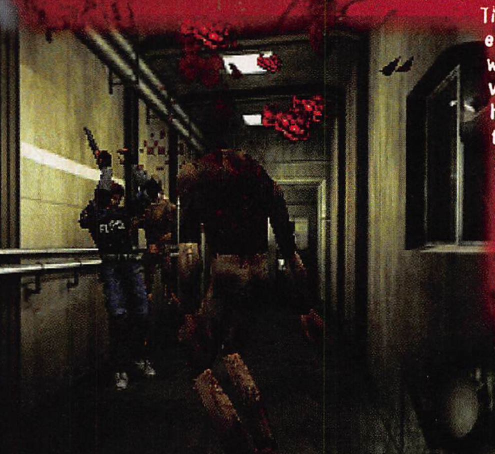


REVIEWED INSIDE:
RESIDENT EVIL: DIRECTOR'S CUT
STREET FIGHTER EX PLUS ALPHA
STREET FIGHTER COLLECTION
TOMB RAIDER 2
MK MYTHOLOGIES
CRASH BANDICOOT 2
ET MOTO 2
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RESIDENT EVIL 2





Okay Rookies, listen up! Bob 'Gunner' Hambleton here, transferring from Agoura Hills PD into the hell-hole of Raccoon City with one thought on my mind; the cullin' and dismemberment of them there varmints, shamblin' folk and general abhorations that've overrun this fair place. I'm a'talkin' ta Heavy Weapons and Tactics over in Chicago; they say the Gatling cannons have been shipped and should be here tomorrow. In the mean time, I need two volunteers for a covert mission, code named "Operation Certain Death". Leon Kennedy? Is that a hand raised? Claire Redfield? You as well? Whee doggie!! Okay people, lock 'n' load; we're takin' back Raccoon City with extreme prejudice! Shoot anythin' with open entrails ahangin''!! Hell, scratch that; shoot any critter that don't look like me!!"

Once again, we head into hellish horror, courtesy of the macabre talents of Capcom of Japan's premiere designing team. The two shiny discs (not to mention a huge squishy eyeball) we received? A 65 percent complete version of the game for both Leon and Claire, and two route variations for each character. The result? The stoppage of work for the entire GameFan staff over a period of two weeks, and mass fisticuffs between those vying to write this preview. In the end, the Hambleton frying pan was mightier than the Rox fireball (we're saving Mister Rox for the final review), and this enabled me to cook up a rather tasty morsel of gaming info for all those folk gagging to play this stunningly anticipated title...

Contrary to crazed ramblings that you may have read elsewhere, *Resident Evil* was never a souped-up version of *Alone*



SHOCK SEQUEL!
SURVIVAL HORROR RETURNS!!
TWICE THE BLOOD...
TWICE THE TERROR...
MYSTERY, MORE MONSTERS!!





in the Dark (that's like comparing *Yie-Ar Kung Fu* to *Tekken 3*), and after the skin-crawling terror that enveloped me on numerous *Resident Evil 2* excursions, I can safely state that the sequel tears apart even it's predecessor and deposits the contents at the bottom of a dark well. Put simply, *Resident Evil 2* leap-frogs all current suspense-inducing titles and has succeeded in cultivating a whole new breed of game, and an even more terrifying world of creeping menace and soft squishy footfalls. With lavish production and utmost care and attention to detail, the world of survival horror has never been as terrifying as this...

From an extended play session, we sat agape, bibbling at many jaw-dropping occurrences. These included some truly shocking cut-scenes with tentacled and pulsating mutations exploding from character's shoulders, a selection of grisly experiments, and a whole host of cut scenes ranging from the hysterical (due to intentionally bad B-movie acting) to the frankly pantaloon exploding (from undead clawing at windows to shattered window panes complete with bird attacks), and all accompanied by the most intensely atmospheric warblings that serve to heighten your fear. I quite literally soiled my Swatgear when a leaping fleshy THING surprised my room searching. You'll round the corner, step over the twitching ex-Police officer, rattle the locked metal door and suddenly... a creaking sound is heard, and malevolent violins begin to lament your coming demise...

The open-mouthed astonishment doesn't end there, either! We soon realized that there was so much more on offer in the second *Resident Evil* (something that the demo disc merely hinted at) that our minds actually boggled (of course, that might have had something to do with the coffee The Enquirer was serving..). Each rendered scene, for example, includes a frightening amount of detail, to such an extent that players should stall their progress to actually view the visual splendor in meticulous detail. Stop and look closely at these gob-smacking environments and you'll see loads of little attentions to detail (such as wall scrawls like the infamous 'REDRUM' [*The Shining*] and 'This Two Shall Pass' [*The Bible*]); and it's the multitude of extra touches that makes the game so much more than a sequel.

The environments, as you'd expect, are immensely spectacular this time around. From your Police Station investigation, into the outbuildings, sewers, industrial complexes and finally to the Umbrella laboratories themselves, you'll clap your little hands excitedly at all the extra combat, the increased number of weird and freaky denizens, and all the extra death animations present this time around. Zombies slide apart, are decapitated in showers of melon-bursting gore, and legs and torsos still shamble, even when shotgunned apart. Not only that, you've different death animations for each weapon. But this all pales into small pallid puddles of gore when compared to the bestial bosses you'll be backpedaling from...



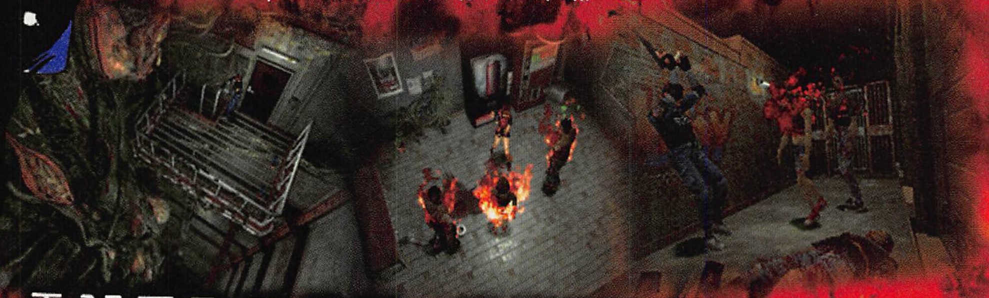




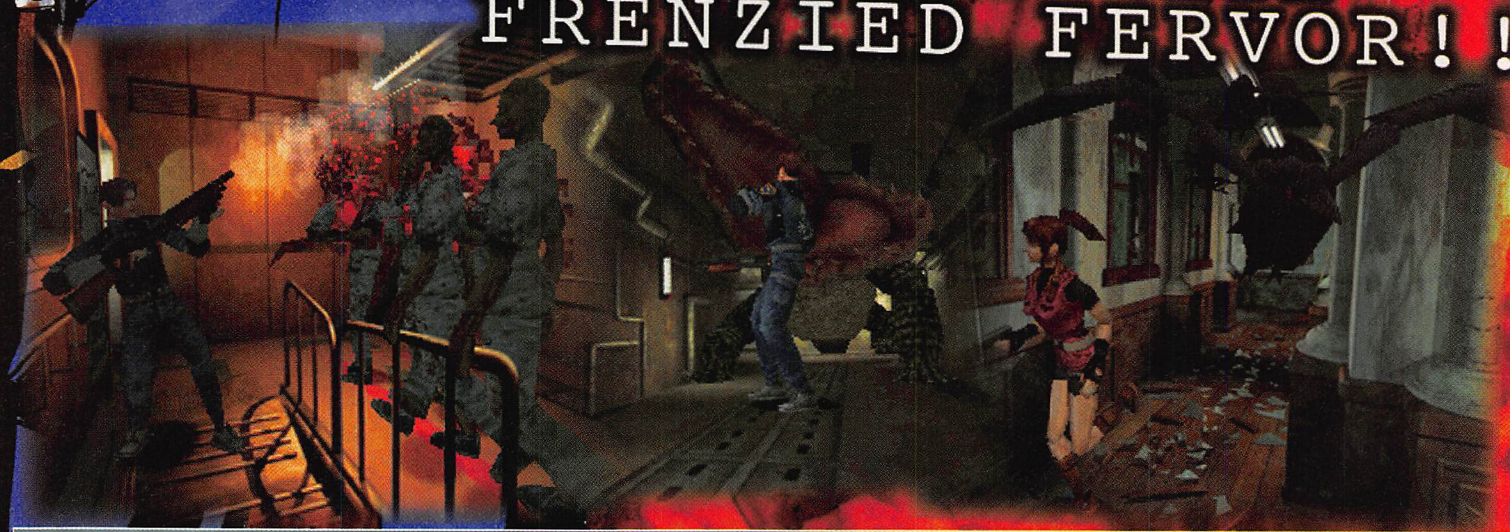
Now I've witnessed some sick and downright demented stuff during my Tour of Duty here at GameFan (mostly when I entered Nick Rox's office), but so far, in silicon form, I've never gawked at the mutation cinemas on show here. Only in *Resident Evil 2* can you watch a Police Chief twitch, spasm, and then rip open as fleshy sinew twists and writhes in a thrashing frenzy of body parts. Cool, eh? The next boss sports a huge bloody claw, and as for those deviant Tyrant types? Well, let's just say there's a whole load more this time around...



But once you've collected the overly plentiful supply of ammunition and faced the true horrors of the game, what else is there left to do? A whole three more versions of the game to play, that's what! It's refreshing to see that both Leon's and Claire's games are sufficiently difficult to warrant reinvestigation, and there's a "remix" variation of each mission with different routes to take. More excitingly still, the decisions you make during your first mission affect the outcome of subsequent quests, allowing a plentiful supply of endings (and costumes, don't forget Leon in his tank top and Claire in her cowgirl get-up!) which Capcom is sure to include in the final build. For now however, I'm content to gun down undead deviants in a manner too disgusting to effectively translate into prose before the final Resident Evil is summoned... Join us next time as we peer into the dark to reveal all! ***CH***



INFLICT BRUTAL BUTCHERY WITH FRENZIED FERVOR!!



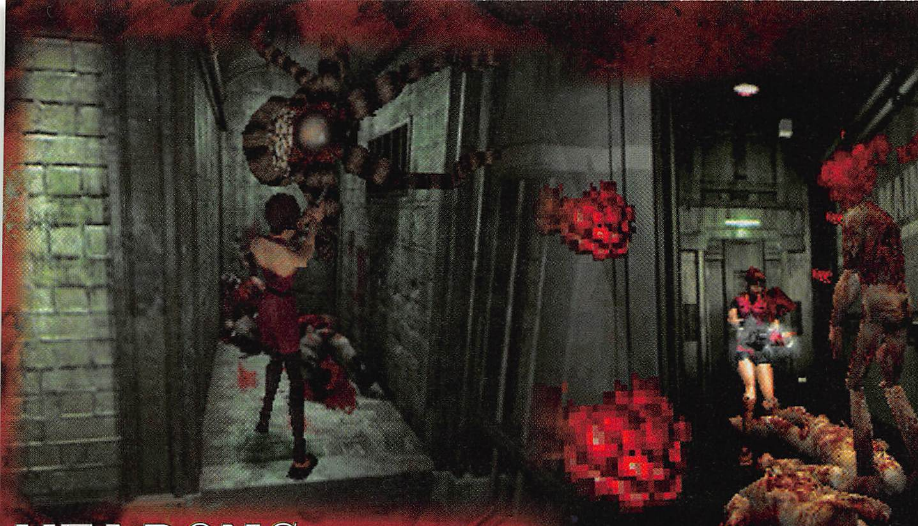
PREVIEW — PlayStation

DEVELOPER - CAPCOM	# OF PLAYERS - 1
PUBLISHER - CAPCOM	DIFFICULTY - AVERAGE
FORMAT - 2 CDs	AVAILABLE - JANUARY '98



CHIEF HAMBLETON

"Hambleton to base... the Evil has landed!"



The mania will not end! More RE2 insanity next month!

WEAPONS

Planting cold steel into soft squishy undead flesh has never been more entertaining than the plethora of killing weapons ordered for *Resident Evil 2* (now over a dozen compared to *Resident Evil's* seven). In addition to your basic pistol (which, incidentally, can be extended into a three-shot rapid fire version), there's a number of choice guns to fondle including; your custom shotgun (heh, heh) which carves a nice chunk of zombie midsection, a sub-machine gun that splits zombie heads like overripe melons, an electric tazer developed by Umbrella (!!!) and a personal favorite of mine... the Gatling cannon. Oh yeah baby, now you can cut down swathes of undead with ol' Painless! Jesse Ventura would be proud! Oorya oorya oorya!! Payback time!!



ENEMIES

Of course, the mainstay of any horrific offering has to be hordes of zombies, and *Resident Evil 2* more than delivers with ten different types. These include ex-police officers, already-munched-on prisoners, the more rabid and obscene kind (complete with ribs, and, er, other areas) exposed, and even female hooker zombies!! Further into your exploration, there's all manner of frightful critters, a fleshy man-sized frog beast, the largest mutant crocodile ever, a load of flesh rippling Umbrella virus ridden deviants, huge eight foot tall folk in green overcoats and a whole load of Tyrant trouble... which we'll reveal in full in our madcap review of all this horror!



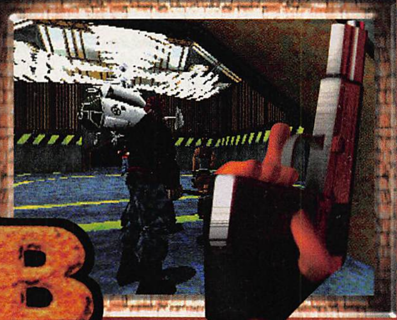


MANGLE FOES AND REDUCE THEM TO LITTLE MORE THAN QUIVERING PAP!


MACE
AMMO 2


"TOASTERS LIKE THIS DON'T COME WITH NEW CHECKING ACCOUNTS."
MACE DANIELS
PlayStation
HAWK
AMMO 0
IN A GAME WHERE JUST ABOUT ANYTHING CAN BECOME A WEAPON, IT'S NICE TO KNOW YOU CAN STILL FIND A GOOD OL' BAZOOKA.
HERE, THE INNER CITY STREETS ARE LITTERED WITH WEAPONS OF ALL SORTS.
SOME OF YOUR OWN MAKING.
OTHERS READY-MADE AND BANNED IN MOST STATES.
ALL PROVIDE ENDLESS HOURS OF EXPLOSIONS, GUNFIRE, AND MISERY OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY.
NO WONDER THIS CITY NEVER SLEEPS.
SMASHER
AMMO 4
FIGHTING FORCE
EIDOS INTERACTIVE
You've been warned.
CORE
www.fightingforce.com




Tomb Raider 2 has a lot to live up to. The original was a runaway hit, single-handedly establishing Core as a world class developer and providing Eidos with the killer title it needed to make waves as a new publisher. *Tomb Raider*'s unique brand of character-driven action and exploration wowed both critics and pundits alike, achieving record breaking

TOMB RAIDER II

STARRING LARA CROFT

sales and making a star out of the game's female lead—the gun-toting Lara Croft. Rough, tough and large of breast, Lara became a videogame celebrity overnight, shattering stereotypes and driving sales of *Tomb Raider* through the roof. Needless to say, a sequel was inevitable.

Personally, I've been looking forward to *TR2* ever since it was announced. *Tomb Raider* was one of my favorite games of '96, and from the early betas, *TR2* promised to be even better. My only concern was that, with the game's original creative duo gone (they left Core last year), *TR2* would end up lacking the creative spark of its predecessor. Thankfully, this has not proved to be the case. *TR2* is a legitimate sequel and then some.

Let's start with the most obvious improvement—the aesthetics. *TR2*'s environments are larger, the character models are more detailed, the textures are cleaner, the animation is smoother and basically the whole 'world' just looks more convincing than the original. This is even more of an achievement when you consider that a lot of the time you will be exploring man-made locations. The frame rate is consistent (for the most part), and, perhaps most impressive of all, Core has added some stunning real time dynamic lighting effects which go beyond functioning as a mere cosmetic enhancement and actually influence the gameplay. Aurally, the environmental 'background' sound effects contribute significantly to the overall atmosphere, while the location-triggered music is as enchanting as ever. Basically *Tomb Raider 2* looks and sounds much better than *Tomb Raider*, a testament to both Core and the PS.




R REVIEW | PlayStation

DEVELOPER - CORE	# OF PLAYERS - 1
PUBLISHER - EIDOS	DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - NOW



KNIGHTMARE
A true warrior's sequel!











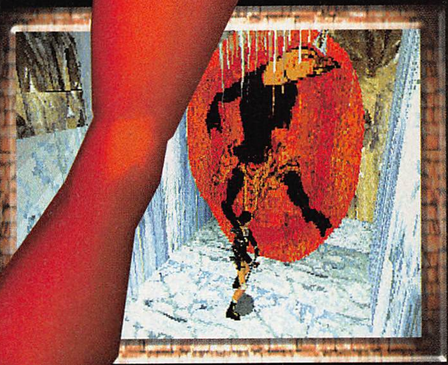


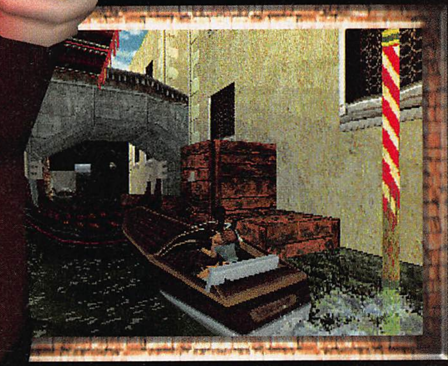
Unfortunately, things haven't improved quite as much in the gameplay department. Core's attitude seems to be 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it—much.' There are some new features to spice up the traditional *Tomb Raider* mix (vehicles, new moves, new weapons, more enemy encounters) and there's no denying that the change of venue and theme is refreshing, but for the most part you'll be exploring locations and battling enemies just like you did in *Tomb Raider*. Now, there are two ways of looking at this. Either a) you liked *Tomb Raider* and are looking forward to more of the same or b) you didn't like *Tomb Raider* and therefore won't like *TR2*. I know some people found the original *TR* to be slow and boring, and the fact is, if you're one of those people, *TR2* will do little to convert you. However, judging by the overwhelming response to *Tomb Raider*, think it's safe to assume that most of you guys (and girls!) fall into the a) category. If not, I'm going to do my best to make you an a) guy.

Like *Tomb Raider* before it, *Tomb Raider 2* provides a unique brand of leisurely paced 'adventure' that strongly emphasizes exploration over action. Lara's ultra-realistic animation contributes immeasurably to her (and the game's) personality, but also limits the spontaneity of the control. Now, while I normally despise games which sacrifice control at the altar of animation, I make a special exception in the case of *Tomb Raider*. Core has managed to strike an acceptable balance between animation and response time, and has cleverly fashioned the gameplay and level design to actually take advantage of these control restraints. Thus, the majority of *Tomb Raider 2*'s challenge comes not from shooting enemies (the combat is still pretty lame) but from solving the countless naturalistic puzzles that make up the body of the gameplay—i.e.. figuring out how to get from point a to point b in one piece.

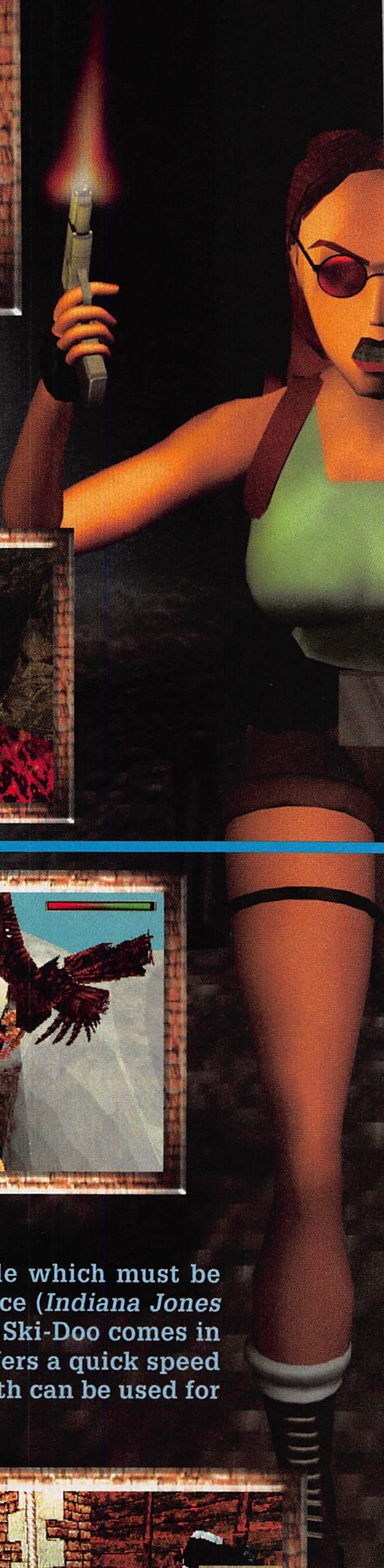
That being the case, the success or failure of *Tomb Raider 2* lies in the hands of the game's level design, and thankfully, as with *Tomb Raider*, Core has come through in style. *TR2*'s many exotic and varied locations are simply works of genius: indescribably huge, intricately complex, fantastic to look at and packed to the hilt with more tricks, traps and puzzles than you are ever likely to find in a videogame. As haphazard as the terrain may appear initially, on closer examination you realize it has been expertly designed down to the pixel to challenge Lara's physical dexterity and your gray matter to the max. Although Core likes to sell *TR* as an 'action' game, the fact is it's a far more cerebral experience.

The one word I keep thinking of when I play *TR2* is epic. This is an epic action/adventure: epic in scope, epic in size (some of the levels are an hour and a half long) and epic in feeling. Even though this is essentially 'more of the same,' there is enough imagination and depth here to keep even the most jaded gamer glued to their console for days. You know, I honestly didn't expect *TR2* to be this good. The fact is, Core could have slapped Lara into some crap puzzle game, called it *Tomb Raider 2*, and it still would have sold a million. I'm glad they didn't. Here's to Eidos' second good game! ***K***







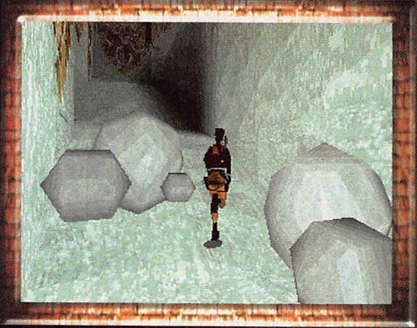



SECRETS!

TR2 does away with the 'secret areas' found in the original *TR* and instead replaces them with hidden dragon statues. There are three dragon statues per level: white, green and gold, and they are normally found in that particular order. Collect all three and you will be given extra ammo and items when you complete the level.









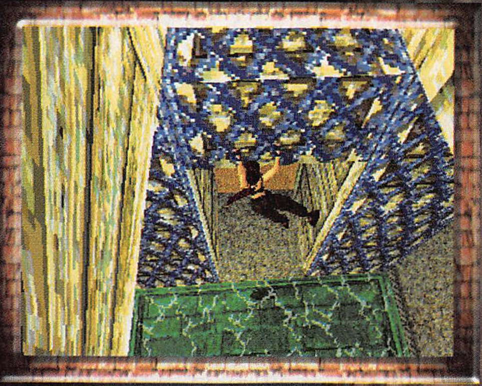
RIDE LARA, RIDE!

At certain points in the game Lara will come across two different types of vehicle which must be used to successfully complete the level. The first is the Speed Boat, found in Venice (*Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, anyone?), and the second is a Ski-Doo, located in Tibet. The Ski-Doo comes in two flavors, red and black, both with different special abilities. The red ski-doo offers a quick speed boost, while the black ski-doo comes mounted with a heavy duty machine-gun. Both can be used for running over any enemies foolish enough to get in your way.











VERY BIG HOUSE IN THE COUNTRY

You get to see even more of Lara's house this time, as she has built her training assault course outside in the mansion's garden! The house itself has also been filled out, with a kitchen, attic, bathroom, living room, even a secret basement filled with the spoils of her previous adventures. Oh, and she has a working stereo in the living room too. Lara is followed everywhere by her trusty servant, Cuthburt. Try locking him in the freezer for a laugh!

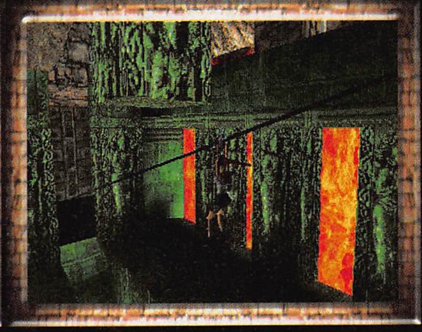












MONK MANIA!

On one of the later stages in the game Lara will visit a place called Barkhang Monastery, inhabited by an order of Tibetan warrior monks. Both Lara and the monks share a common goal: stop Bartolli from gaining the dagger of Xian, and provided you do not attack any of the monks first, they will aid you in your battle against Bartolli's goons. Lead an enemy to an area populated by monks, step back and watch the fun!







DAMN I'M LOOKING GOOD!!









WHO WANT'S SOME??!!









After Lobotomy's amazing Saturn port of Duke Nukem 3D it was clear that GT Interactive had their work cut out for them if they wanted the PS version to compete in the same league. Interestingly, UK-based developer Aardvark Software seems to have taken a somewhat different approach. Rather than re-design the game to cater specifically to the strengths and weaknesses of the console (as Lobotomy did with the Saturn version), Aardvark have chosen to remain true to the source material and attempt a pixel-perfect port.

While the Saturn version was missing some of the PC's cooler stuff (like moving subway trains, etc.), PS Duke is 100% proof. Literally every detail of the PC original - from the exact level design to the ability to duck - has been faithfully replicated. It's almost as if Aardvark somehow found a way to port the Build engine directly across to the PS. However, this approach, while sure to please Duke 3D purists, has one major problem; namely, speed. The frame rate fluctuates erratically and at times becomes quite un-playable. We're talking worse than Saturn Doom here folks. And while I'm bitching I may as well add that the pre-defined button configurations all suck. If you want to have the L and R shoulder buttons as strafe, you can't have a look button(!). Compared to Jevons Control™ on Saturn Duke, it's like playing with your toes.

The good news is that almost everything is else is fine. You get an all new Aardvark-designed episode, re-mixed music (catchy!), a link-mode (oh joy!), software mip-mapping (optional), and speedy loading. Check back in 30 for a full review. *K*



KNIGHTMARE'S NOTES...



PLUG AND PRAY!

Exclusive to the PS version of *Duke 3D* you get an all new 11 level episode entitled Plug and Pray. This episode features levels 'inspired' by a variety of modern movies and games including *Tomb Raider* (Nightmare Zone), *Psycho* (Gates Motel), and an homage to disaster movies called '*Dante's Pigferno*'. New textures, new enemies, new fun! Ahem...

DUKE NUKEM 3-D
TOTAL MELTDOWN

P PREVIEW | PlayStation

DEVELOPER - AARDVARK SOFTWARE	# OF PLAYERS - 1-2
PUBLISHER - GT INTERACTIVE	DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - NOW



KNIGHTMARE At least Rage Software didn't have anything to do with it...



"Did you call for a delivery?"

TNN MOTOR SPORTS

HARDCORE 2™

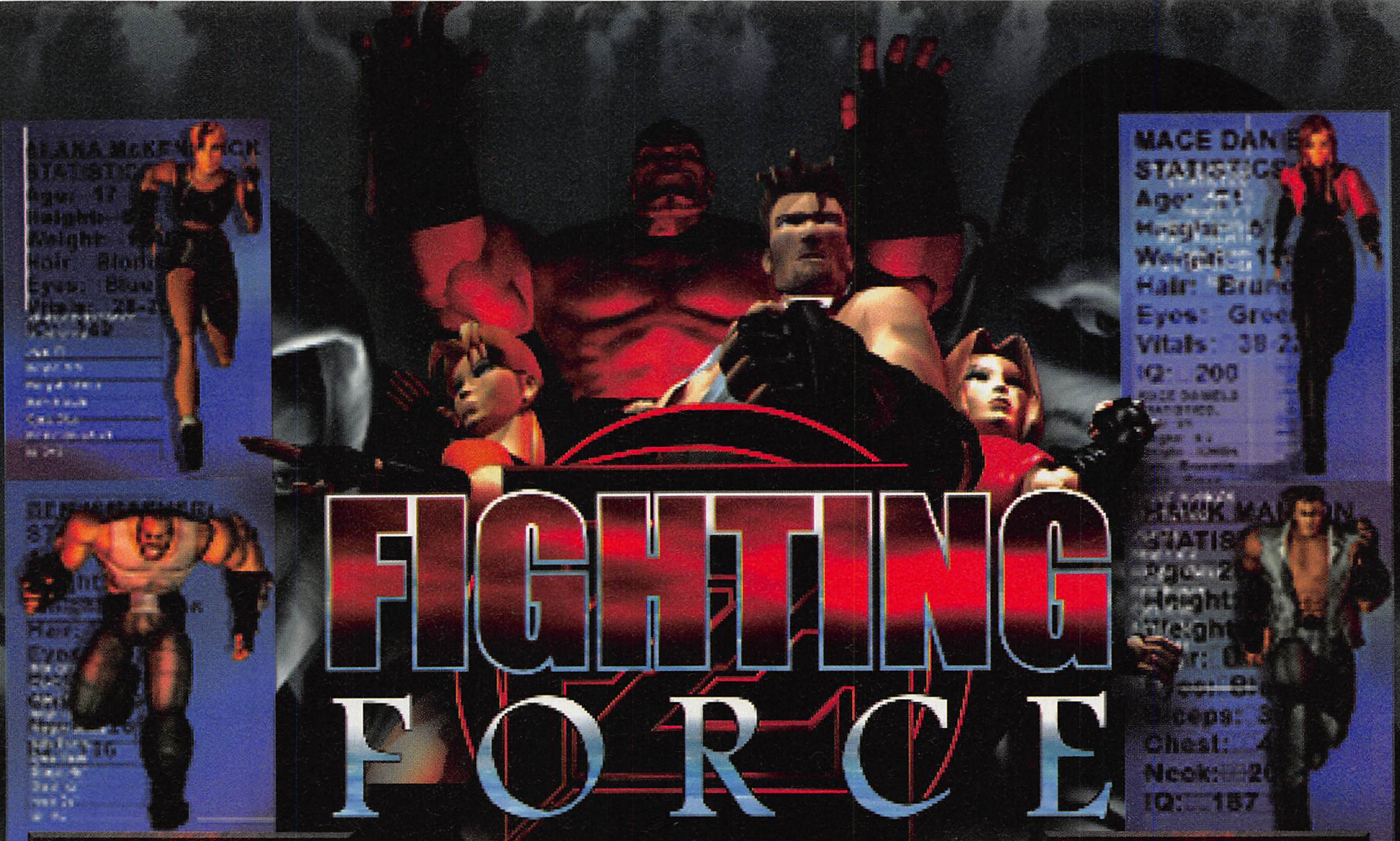
DRIVE LIKE AN ANIMAL

KIDS TO ADULTS
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

PlayStation™

Windows® 95
PC·CD-ROM INTERACTIVE™

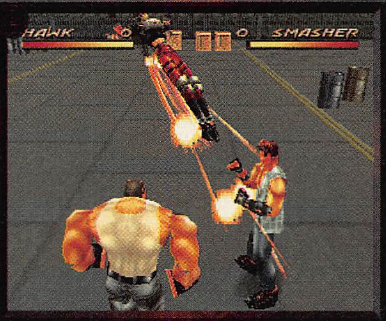
ASC GAMES™











Hone your fighting skills and settle fierce rivalries in the *Battle Arena*! Comes complete with cool backgrounds to mess with!





You want punishment? Of course you do! *Insane bosses* will smash you with skull-cracking powers!

As promised, I'm back for the *Fighting Force* review! Ever since that first preview, I've been totally impressed by the concept behind *FF*. I mean, a 3D 'go anywhere' beat-'em-up? Yes! That's one of the (many) reasons why I own a PS; 3D games have been stretched and explored farther than ever before on this platform. So, if *Bushido Blade* rocked as a free-roaming fighter, does *Fighting Force* work as a free-roaming beat-'em-up? We shall see...

I've always said that *Fighting Force* needed two things: a) length & depth and b) complex play-mechanics. Well, I'm happy to report that *FF* is plenty long, and plenty tough, but it unfortunately plays as two-dimensionally as...er...a 2D beat-'em-up. You see, for all of *FF*'s gorgeous 30 fps graphical bravado, we have a tragically linear attack system at play here. Remember those great combos I spoke of in the preview? They never made it in. Your attacks are limited to pressing the punch button *over* and *over*, or the kick button *over* and *over*. No links between punches and kicks, not a one. And remember the *Tekken*-style in-grab combos Core planned on packin' into the game? Bah, they ain't here. You grab with the grab button, press one of three buttons after that, do one of three or four throws, and that's all she wrote. Doh! In all fairness, the timeless *Final Fight* also had a very limited selection of moves and grabs, and we all know how cool it turned-out to be, regardless. I guess I was (rightfully) expecting a bit more gameplay savvy out of a 3D beat-'em-up. Anyway, the control *is* great, especially your running attacks, and the enemy AI is impressive and intelligent, knockin' you back with lightning fast reactions and counters. *FF* is also very difficult thanks to lop-sided odds (the bad guys *swarm* you!) and limited amounts of health power-ups.

In the end, *Fighting Force* isn't quite the product it could've or should've been. Despite a killer polygon engine and cool tunes, it needs more moves, more plot, more substance. As a two-player game, however, you'll get that mindless beat-'em-up feeling all over again, and, given the ample length and difficulty, it should keep you playing happily for weeks on end.

When punches and kicks don't do the trick, look for *deadly weapons* to defend yourself! Smash a fence and use the pieces, rip-out railings in an elevator, use monitors, crates, barrels, knives, berettas, grenades, bazookas, shotguns, even a muffler! Pick 'em up and kill!

R REVIEW | PlayStation

DEVELOPER - CORE	# OF PLAYERS - 1-2
PUBLISHER - EIDOS	DIFFICULTY - TOUGH
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - NOW



GLITCH
Awesome levels, amazing engine...and, wow! No combos! Can't have everything.



Tactics Ogre™
The Next Chapter in the Ogre Battle™ Series.
A land torn apart by war.
An epic struggle between good and evil.
Kachua
This is not going to work. Besides, what good is it to kill these men?
Kachua
No need to worry.
Morduba
As you say.
Zapan
ATLUS
LORD
BLEU NECKLACE
RED ARMOR
LONG SWORD
WHITE SHIELD
REGISTERED
Available Exclusively For The PlayStation™ Game Console
100 plus hours of gameplay.
8 different possible endings.
Non-linear storyline.
3-D isometric battlefields.
PlayStation
RPG/SIM
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Tactics Ogre, ©1995 Quest ©1997 Artdink.
ATLUS
TEEN
AGES 13+
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB





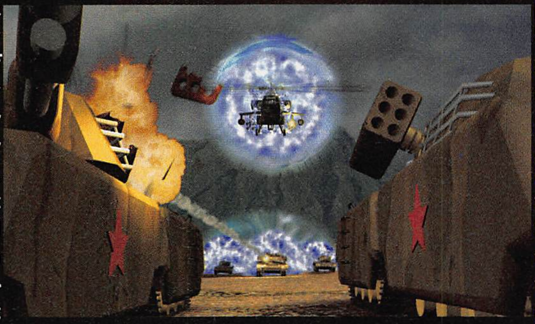


Command & Conquer
Red Alert





When I first arrived at GameFan, I noticed a couple of things immediately: First, contrary to popular belief, GF staff members do not possess god-like powers (except maybe Knightmare—he made me say that) nor are they 20 feet tall (15 maybe, but definitely not 20). Secondly, they played an awful lot of *Warcraft II* after hours. Now, I've always been a *C&C* man myself, so I felt it was my civic duty to extol the virtues of Westwood's finest. Sure enough, they were soon happily blasting each other with ion cannons and obelisks of power on our happy little Mac network (well, it's happy when it's up). Now we've just received the PS version of the sequel to the game that has eaten up so much of our spare (and not so spare) time—*Command & Conquer: Red Alert*. It improves tremendously on last year's version with a host of new features, enhancements, and gameplay that makes the first look quite crusty in comparison.



It seems Einstein wasn't a big fan of all the ugliness of World War 2, and has decided to do something about it. Taking the theory of relativity to its furthest possible realization, he has built a time machine in 1946 and decided to deal with Hitler personally. Traveling back to post-WWI Germany he takes Hitler out of the picture, presumably by dropping him into the time stream to be lost forever (shades of *Dr. Who*). Alas, time is ever a fickle beast, and with Hitler gone it paves the way for Josef Stalin to take his place. With Stalin at the fore, the Soviet Union becomes a massive juggernaut, steam-rolling over all in its awesome might. Fast forward to the present day with a handful of struggling European countries (England, France, Germany etc. as the Allies) fighting against the nigh-unstoppable Soviet force (the Axis). Likewise, in the game you get one set of missions for the Soviets and one for the allies (each on its own disc).

The visuals in this game are much improved over the previous PS rendition. The game still moves at a manic 60 FPS even with hordes of screen-choking sprites. The weapon effects are decent, with nice explosions and there are no lens flares to be seen anywhere (hallelujah!). For the most part the graphics are good, but





R REVIEW | PlayStation

DEVELOPER - WESTWOOD	# OF PLAYERS - 1-2 (LINK-UP)
PUBLISHER - VIRGIN INTER.	DIFFICULTY - HARD
FORMAT - 2 CDs	AVAILABLE - NOW



ECM
"Shake it, baby."





they would have been fantastic had they run in hi-res mode—the PC version looks beautiful for that reason alone. Then again, the insane speed would probably have to be chopped, so I guess I can't complain... too much. Special note goes to the increased sprite size of everything in the game, which makes things much easier to see and much simpler to 'click' on with the clunky PS pad (though the mouse might be a wise purchase, regardless).

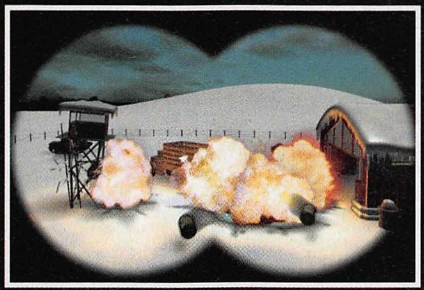
As for the music and sound effects, well, I have to suggest you kill the odd



sounding techno the instant you boot up as it tends to grate on the nerves leading to bouts of insanity and thumb-sucking (well, maybe I exaggerate, but only a little). The effects, on the other hand are, really "boom"-bastic (fantastic, even); the clatter of gunfire and the various explosions are well done. And this time each variety of troop has his (or her) own unique phrase, instead of repeating the same three droning snippets over and over.

Gameplay (for those new to the series) consists of moving various units—tanks, troops, aircraft, etc.—around a map from an overhead perspective in the hopes of completing various assigned missions. These range from all-out elimination of the enemy in a given area to guerrilla-style operations. You simply use the PS pad (or preferably, the PS mouse) to click on a given unit and then target an enemy or area and voila, they carry out your orders. It's like playing little green army men with nasty weapons, and hey, they won't melt in the sun. While it sounds simple, it's intensely addictive and amazingly difficult in some spots—try it just once and you'll be hooked, guaranteed.

With the wide variety of new units



(radar jammers, chronospheres, and the lovely Tanya, of course) and some terrific playability, this game will find a welcome home in the hands of any *C&C* or strategy game fan. The rest o' ya would do well to get with the program and pick this one up as well. It sold about a zillion copies to PC gamers (yes, they occasionally get good games) and looks to do the same on Sony's box of might. Oh, and with the PS destined to strike the magical $99 price point by the time you read this, it may be worth your while to snag a second copy for some super-hot link play—the best on the PS thus far. ***ECM***







STAR WARS MASTERS OF TERÄS KÄSI

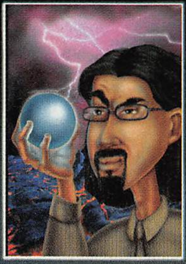
IN A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY...



R REVIEW

PlayStation

- DEVELOPER - LUCAS ARTS
- PUBLISHER - LUCAS ARTS
- FORMAT - CD
- # OF PLAYERS - 1-2
- DIFFICULTY - MODERATE
- AVAILABLE - NOW



SUBSTANCE D
I have felt him, my master.

No matter how tantalizing the idea of a Star Wars fighting game might be, is it really a sound concept? Why on earth are these characters fighting each other!?!? Yeah, yeah, a game is fantasy so why not explore implausible scenarios for the sake of entertainment? I'll tell you why. There are two reasons. One, the fact that a Star Wars fighter exists in the first place reeks of such crass commercialism, I can hardly bring myself to look the game in the face. And two, the game simply sucks. Please, if you're going after the bucks, at least put the time and effort into the game so that people like me can tell you what a great game you've made and the kids who buy it won't feel ripped off.









The Masters of Teras Kasi serves up nine fighters from the Star Wars universe-Luke, Han, Leia, Chewie, Boba Fett, a Gammorean Guard, a Tusken Raider, Shadow's Arden Lyn, and the dark one, Lord Vader. Already, the game is much less than it could have been. There are just so many potential characters from the films, that to include only nine is unforgivably lame. You could have had more bounty hunters, different kinds of storm troopers, even Lando or the freaking Emperor! What's worse, instead of including even one more character from the canon (the films) LucasArts picked some lame character from Shadows of the Empire. I'd rather see Greedo.



Alright, so there are only nine characters. They must all be incredibly well modeled and meticulously animated, right? In a word, no. For instance, the Gammorean Guard looks like cheap imitation of the celluloid version and all characters move with so little grace and such stiffness that you wonder how any kind of good fighting system could be hidden in the muck. And indeed, the game plays poorly. Combos are wholly unsatisfying, control response is slow, and you'll find none of the flowing, effortless ease that accompanies a good 3D fighter. This is one of those games where you feel as if you're forcing your character around on the screen.



So you may ask yourself, "Don't the Star Wars characters count for something?" Yeah sure, a little. It's a kick seeing Han going up against Chewie or Leia versus Darth, but its a novelty that soon wears thin once the dire nature of the gameplay is discovered. On the other hand, if you thought *Criticom* was the pinnacle of fighting games, then maybe you'll like this. The only thing in this game that's really good is the redbook Williams score, but seriously, how hard was that for LucasArts to pull off? The Force was sadly lacking in this one... ***SD***









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PlayStation

MIDWAY

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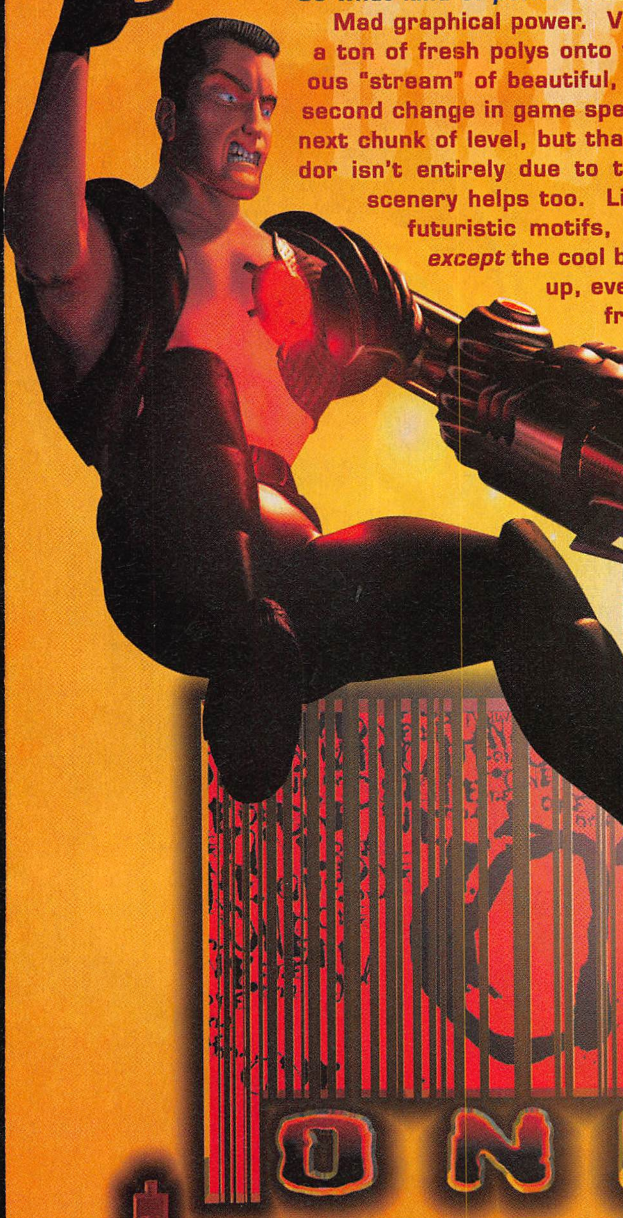


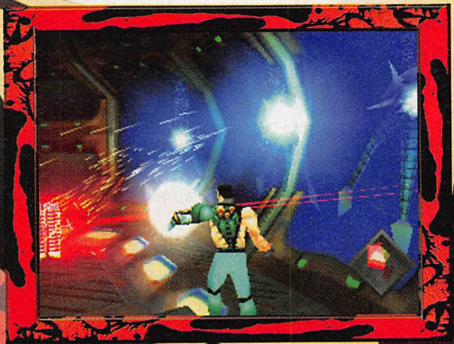



Damn, *ONE* has POWER! Game of the month! Easily a candidate for Game of the Year! I thought our last version, a pre-final beta, was the $#&@. Ha! Give Visual Concepts a couple of months to tweak and suddenly it's an *amazing* game. I've been looking for this kind of pure, no-holds-barred action ever since the 32-bit systems appeared...you know, a bad-ass, hyper-explosive festival of action & blasting that simply never stops delivering. The search is over...*ONE* has been found...and I'm loving every second of it. Join me...

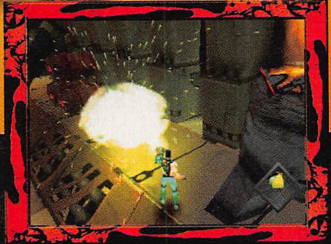
So what kind of power does ONE possess?

Mad graphical power. Visual Concepts' incredible "Asynchronous" streaming engine pumps a ton of fresh polys onto the screen a dozen or so times every level, allowing for a continuous "stream" of beautiful, detailed sights. You might notice, every few games or so, a half-second change in game speed as the "Asynchronous" wonder goes to work slamming down the next chunk of level, but that's it. For all intents and purposes it's seamless. The visual splendor isn't entirely due to the streaming technique, however much it helps. No, hard-core scenery helps too. Literally every facet of *ONE*'s graphic design is flanked by incredible futuristic motifs, and absolutely everything you see is 100% 3D (O.K., everything *except* the cool bit-map BGs). Every part of the playfield, every enemy, every power-up, even all the weapon fire-it's all 3D. Eye-slaying lighting effects join the fray with insane flashes of light and color. The explosive pyrotechnics display will kill you. Screen Meltdown, 30 fps everywhere in sight, mad depth, and lord-like artistic skills. It's just mania! Oh, and the bosses...they smash almost any PS 3D we've seen up to now. **Mmm...Graphics: 10.**











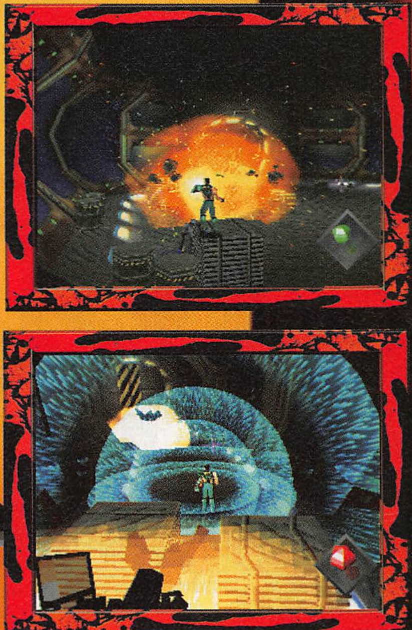

Is the gameplay as solid as the graphics?

"Hell yeah!!!" quoth a wide-eyed Glitch. It's just amazing how well *ONE* plays. Get to grips with the cool control system, and you're all ready to enter the long, deep levels. There's mad-blasting and dodging in Metropolis, platforming in the Mountains, chaotic timing in the Lab, and HELL awaits you in the Research facility. And the weapons... Pulse Cannon, Homing Missile Launcher, Flame Thrower (causing crazy effects) chuck your enemies around like dolls! But wait, you say, what's *not* good about *ONE*? Well, some of the collision is a little questionable, but it's rarely when it really counts (i.e., enemies, bosses, platforms). Also, the graphics may be too good. You'll be very distracted, trust me. Ha!

And the Verdict you've been expecting...

ONE is riddled with unforgettable moments. Moments where the action, cameras, and mind-numbing graphics and sound combine to form an amazingly directed, ultra-playable action feast. Remember the first time you played *Contra 3*, bouncing from missile to missile against that big boss? It's that brand of perfect rock-hard difficulty and ludicrous action that makes *ONE* so special. Every time you die you just want to play it again. The epic shooter we needed has arrived!

G

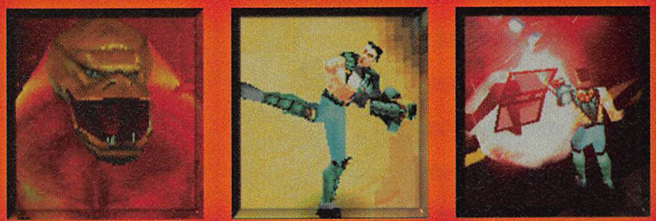






POWER BOSSES!

ONE has killer bosses, period. Take on a huge laser-strafing gunship, a mad giant cyborg eel, a mammoth lobster-clawed mech, or how 'bout a squadron of trigger-happy bomber jets? And they're just massive...all of 'em! Fear not, however. These power-packed freaks can be defeated through the tried and true method of learning patterns and finding weak-spots. Now, the intensity level may be set, um, MUCH higher than your typical shooter, and these patterns may seem unlikely in moments of chaos, but each boss is perfectly implemented and completely fair. Besides dude, just look at those bad-asses! I'd venture to say that these bosses could crush ANY set of bosses, from any other game. They certainly *look* better...



JOHN CAIN: ACTION HERO

For a guy with no memory, John Cain is a skilled man. His moves consist of: Fire, hand-to-hand, jump (and double jump), smart bomb, crouch, strafe, lock-on, dive, and climb. Get to know these moves and suddenly you're slicing through the hordes with manic ease!

And I actually had a big part in the final tweaking:

1) I gave strafing the thumbs-up (duh, who wouldn't, it rocks!)

2) I requested that lock-on firing be possible when crouched, they said, "Cool" and stuck it in. Now I crouch, spin, and fire!

3) I demanded that hand-to-hand moves have more variety and range, and they made it so. Check out Cain's flash kick!

4) The hook-line ride in the Plateau level desperately needed hand-to-hand moves. I told 'em, they did it. What a life-saver!

5) It's not gameplay-related, but I had 'em add some *5th Element*-type hover cars to the Metropolis level, 'cause I thought it would complete the awesome look. It does.

6) While too subtle to list every single detail, some levels play the way they do 'cause I offered the all-important feedback ASC and VC needed. Anytime I can help make games better, sign me up!

R REVIEW

PlayStation

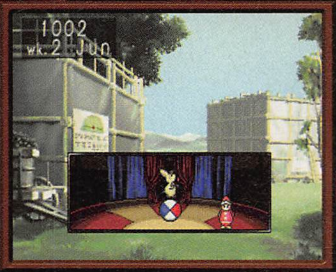
DEVELOPER -	# OF PLAYERS - 1
PUBLISHER -	DIFFICULTY -
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - NOW



GLITCH
The ONE game that finally does everything it promised!

…and on the 6th day he emerged from his cubicle: beaten, battered, and a little bit wiser for he had experienced one of the best games this year. What was this phenomenal work of art? Square's latest RPG? An intense platform adventure such as *Crash Bandicoot 2*? Or perhaps a riveting fighter in the form of *Street Fighter EX*? Nope, uh-uh, not a chance—well, maybe a slim chance—but no, it happens to take the form of a hot little number by the name of *Monster Rancher*, by Tecmo. Grab a monster at the outset and it's off to raise 'em for intense arena combat.





After picking up your little bundle of terror (from the preset monsters or generated off a CD of your choosing) you name it, and it's off to the ranch to raise it with a taste for blood. Have it go through training that increases it's abilities RPG-style, and also having it work to earn cash so it can continue to mature into a full-blown hellion. Each job or skill training session is played out in a little animated cut scene showing it succeeding, or failing, at the particular task—funny stuff. Discipline is important (no room for cream puffs in this game), and you must always have it getting ready for the big fight so you can earn more money to make a bigger, badder, better (thanks SNK), killing machine. It's a vicious cycle that hasn't let me put the controller down for less than 8 hours a session—I think it's time for a support group: Monster Ranchers Anonymous. ECM: "Hi, I'm ECM and I'm a monster addict", Fellow Junkies: "Hi ECM!".





REVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - TECMO

PUBLISHER - TECMO

FORMAT - CD

\# OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - EASY

AVAILABLE - 4TH QTR.



ECM
Must play more…
Must play more…

"Grab a monster at the outset and its off to raise 'em for intense arena combat." ECM

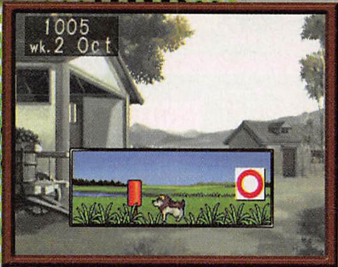
Which brings us to the point of it all: blood-letting battle in the coliseum. After taking the time to produce a physical specimen that Dr. Moreau would be proud of, enter it into arena combat in order to increase your status and earn piles of cash. There are officially sanctioned bouts (is that Don King over there?) and simple back street brawls that don't earn you any respect, but oddly enough tend to score you more money. You have a choice as to whether you control it (recommended) or let the computer do the job. Fights are fairly basic and are one round in length. You simply press the 'X' button to activate certain moves and watch the two monsters bite, chew, and claw each other into submission (Mike Tyson would feel right at home), it's that simple and painfully addicting.

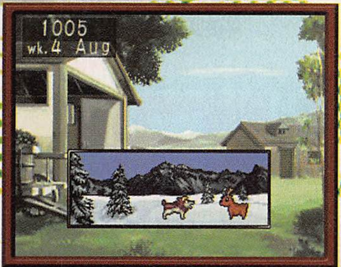
So what's the hold up? You need to have this game! I wasn't joking as to whether this is one of the hottest titles this holiday season; it is, without doubt, or hesitation. BUY IT! ***ECM***

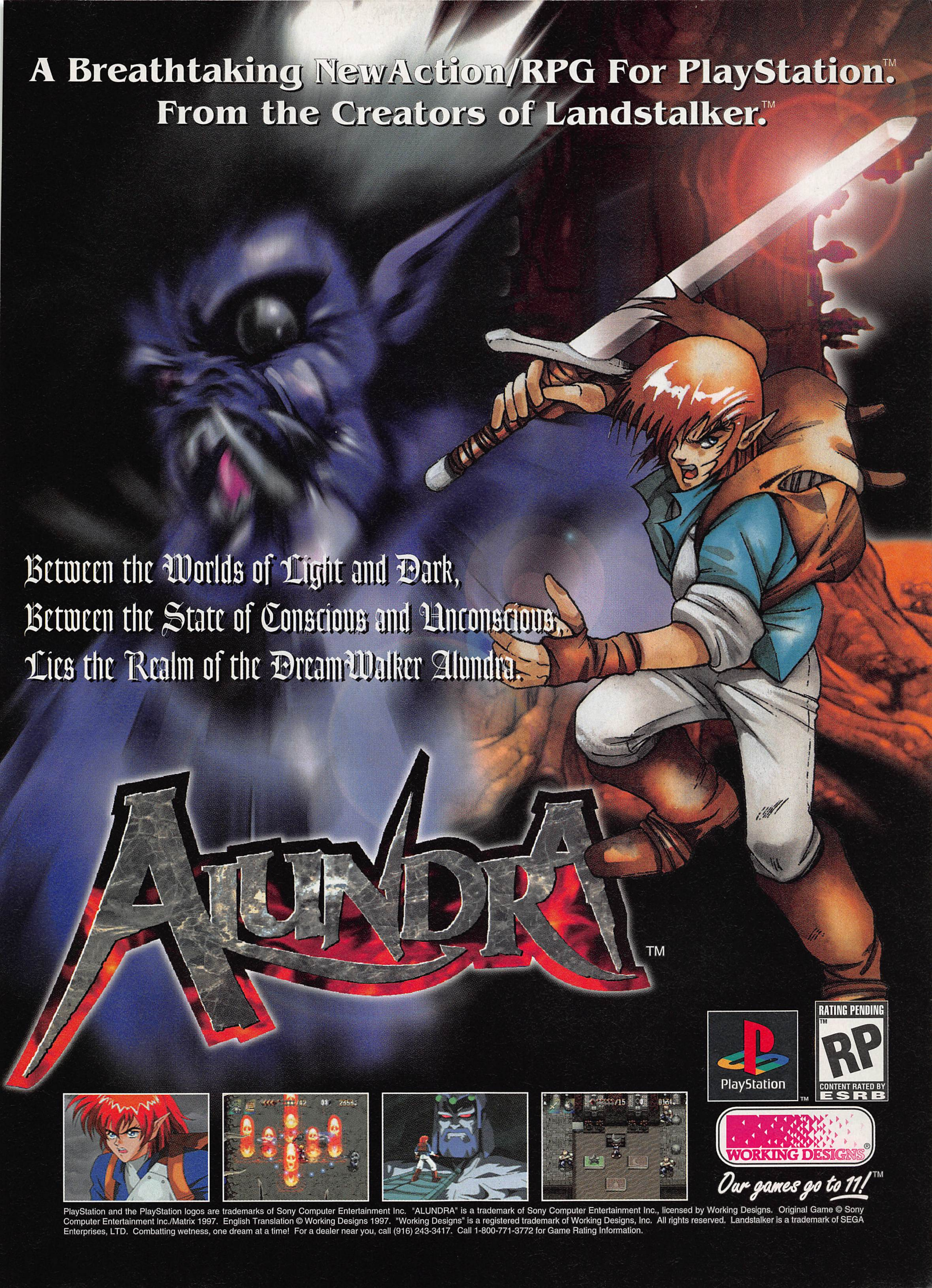











A Breathtaking New Action/RPG For PlayStation.™
From the Creators of Landstalker.™
Between the Worlds of Light and Dark,
Between the State of Conscious and Unconscious,
Lies the Realm of the DreamWalker Alundra.
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I must admit, being a fan of the, uh, slightly unusual racing games (*Rally Cross*, *Jet Moto*, *Choro Q*, etc.), I was kind of anxious to see *Bug Riders*. A flying/racing/combat game? Sign me up! So, I loaded it up and prepared for a fun afternoon. Well, look, there's the intro, excellently rendered, glorious, and long, with a little intro for each selectable character in there, as well. And on to the options. Let's see, one player, normal difficulty, camera tilt on, music test... Whoa! The music's excellent! Sort of choral, majestic, and dancy at the same time. And the characters are awesome! Great design work



CHOOSE YER BUG AND HOP ON! LET'S "BUZZ" THE TOWER!



went into this one. Cool, now on to the game. All right, slight loading time, not too bad, and here we are at the starting line. Hmmm, graphically, this game is pretty good. Lots of scenery, little to no pop-up, many opponents; frame rate's not great, but hovers pretty constant, just shy of 30 fps.

But something's wrong... What the—? Hey! The track is kind of, well, pulling me along. Look, I can let go of the controller and turn almost perfectly, hardly hitting anything!

Seriously, though, everything about this game is really good, except the gameplay. Steering is twitchy, especially with the more



BUGRIDERS



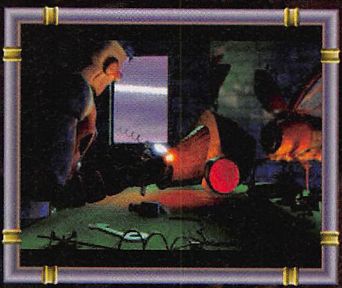
agile bugs, and the way you're forced into turns is quite annoying; try cutting a corner to save a fraction of a second and you're pushed further into the turn before the game "allows" you to turn. It appears all of the weapons have been made "homing" to a certain extent, apparently to compensate for the difficulty you'd have hitting anything with the control the way it is. (Oh, and the frame rate in two-player mode drops to about 15 fps.)

But, if you can overlook the control oddities, and are thinking of a purchase, it's definitely one you should rent before you buy. *Bug Riders* is a great package, with great art design, beautiful characters and an impressive intro—but lacking where it counts: control and gameplay. ***R***











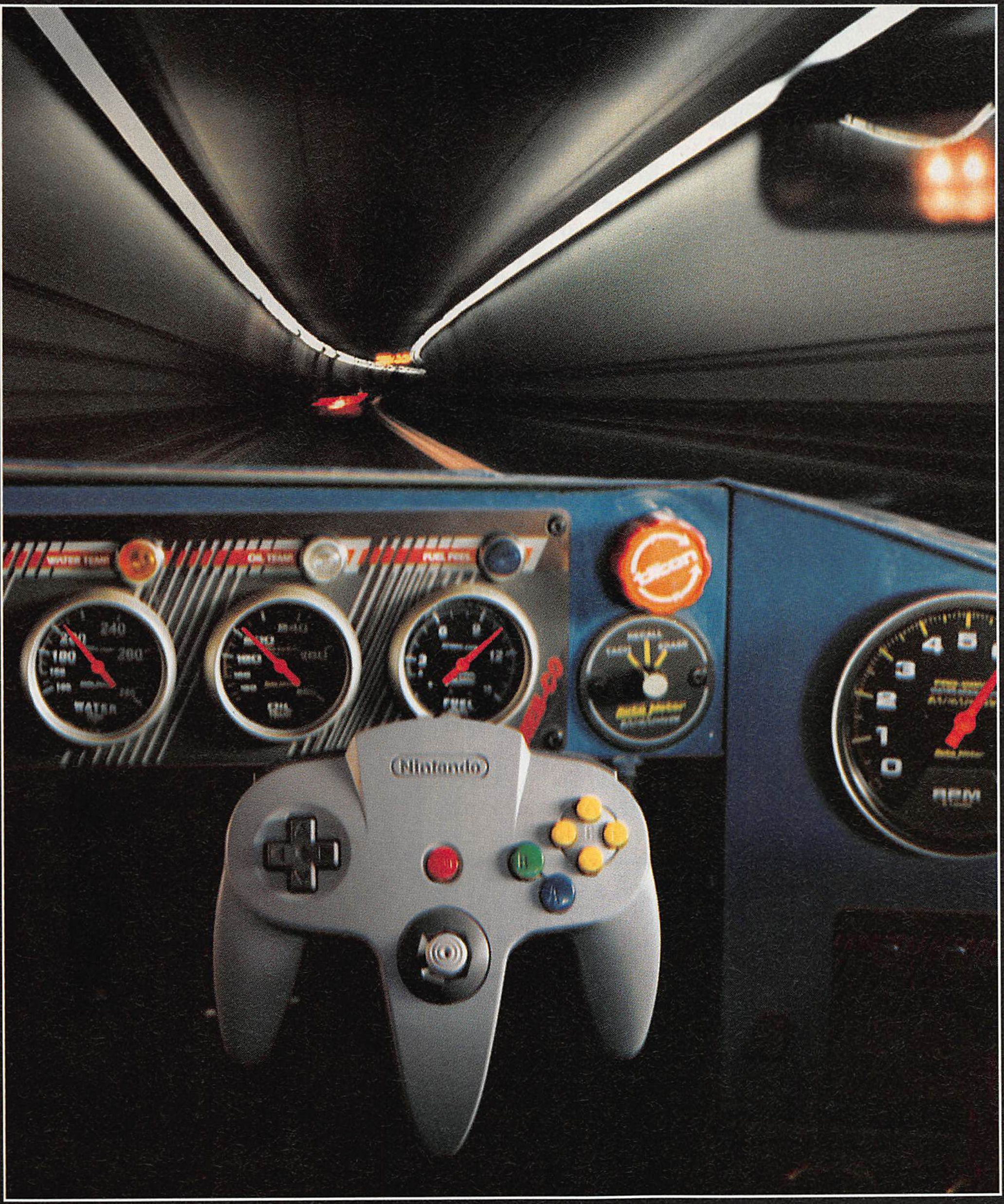
R REVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - N-SPACE	# OF PLAYERS - 1-2
PUBLISHER - GT INTERACTIVE	DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - NOW



REUBUS
Hey! Meyer looks like me! Well, with less hair...











Is it really just a game?

Multi-Racing Championship blurs more than just the scenery. It blurs the line between gaming and reality.

Each of MRC's eight, fully customizable vehicles (plus two other secret vehicles) allow you to tweak gears, brakes, suspension and more. And you'll need to, because MRC's three intense courses pit you against more than just the clock. You'll be up against neck snapping terrain, nasty weather and up to 20 other drivers at a time.

Designed for the N64 Rumble Pak, MRC's detailed graphics, sound and multiple viewing perspectives can mean only one thing.

It starts where all the others finish.



MRC™ MULTI-RACING CHAMPIONSHIP

NINTENDO 64

KIDS TO ADULTS
K-A
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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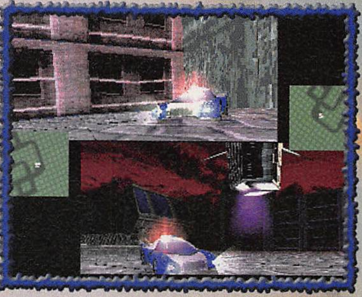
CRIME KILLER











It's not everyday that a combat-driving game strolls through the offices of GF sporting a glistening 60 fps engine, but *Crime Killer* from European developers Pixelogic and Interplay is just that. Every person who happened to walk by and see this game in action was literally stunned by its frame rate and almost complete absence of any kind of texture warping whatsoever. There's simply nothing like a game that runs at 60 frames.

Unfortunately, we only had two working levels of the game (plus a split-screen, two player deathmatch mode) to play around with, so obviously a lot of the game remains to be seen. Our version had one motorbike level and one car level. In the speedy motorbike portion, you're racing around a multi-path track in an attempt to destroy forty enemy vehicles within a certain number of laps. In the more urban car

BLINDING 60 FPS ACTION!!

level, a group of police vehicles must be destroyed while wave after wave of flying bomb ships constantly litter the road ahead with death from above. Both scenes are impressive with the aforementioned 60 fps and some great light sourcing fueling the futuristic backdrop. And each of the two different player machines on display in the game exhibit cool behavior, such as weapons that physically raise and lower on your vehicle and some excellent headlight effects.

Developers Pixelogic have ambitious plans to also add a flying vehicle to the mix, no small feat if 60 frames are to be maintained, but with a planned release set for the Spring of '98, they should have plenty of time to implement everything they want to. They've certainly got a mean engine running here already and the seeds of a fun game are certainly in place. We'll keep you abreast of *Crime Killer*'s development over the months as Pixelogic have quickly become a company to watch. ***SD***



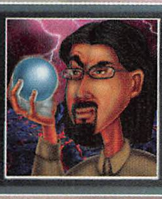




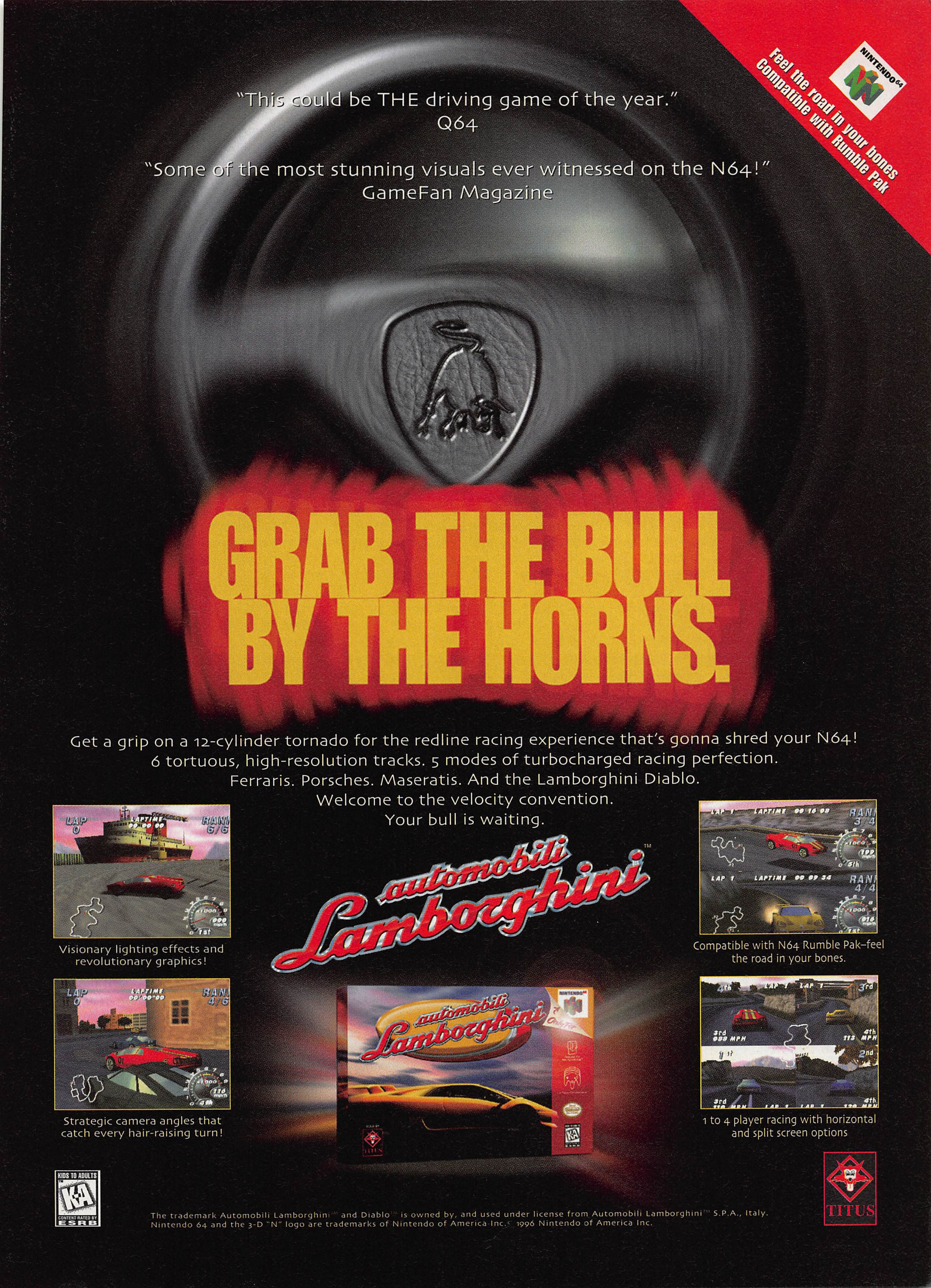


PREVIEW | PlayStation

- DEVELOPER - PIXELOGIC
- PUBLISHER - INTERPLAY
- FORMAT - CD
- # OF PLAYERS - 1-2
- DIFFICULTY - N/A
- AVAILABLE - SPRING '98



SUBSTANCE D
It's all about 60 frames.



"This could be THE driving game of the year."
Q64
"Some of the most stunning visuals ever witnessed on the N64!"
GameFan Magazine
NINTENDO 64
Feel the road in your bones
Compatible with Rumble Pak
GRAB THE BULL BY THE HORNS.
Get a grip on a 12-cylinder tornado for the redline racing experience that's gonna shred your N64!
6 tortuous, high-resolution tracks. 5 modes of turbocharged racing perfection.
Ferraris. Porsches. Maseratis. And the Lamborghini Diablo.
Welcome to the velocity convention.
Your bull is waiting.
automobili Lamborghini™
Visionary lighting effects and revolutionary graphics!
Strategic camera angles that catch every hair-raising turn!
Compatible with N64 Rumble Pak–feel the road in your bones.
1 to 4 player racing with horizontal and split screen options
KIDS TO ADULTS
K-A
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
TITUS



Working Designs' latest (there's a very funny joke in there somewhere) is the pseudo, sorta, kinda sequel to the classic Landstalker on Genesis. Produced in Japan by Matrix (which is comprised of some of the original members of Climax which produced that classic) and released there by Sony, WD wisely snapped up the rights to it when SCEA passed. It's an action/RPG in the most classic of senses with a 3/4 overhead view and lots of sword-swinging, puzzle-solving antics. It's certainly a good start for WD on the PS platform, seeing as how the RPG market is currently on fire thanks in no small part to a little game called Final Fantasy 7.





As the young adventurer, Alundra, you have embarked on a series of quests that start out rather vague as he is following his dreams in the hopes of fulfilling his destiny—it all begins a little murky and vague but you're brought up to speed soon enough. You begin the game aboard a ship which quickly becomes near-fatal, and then you're off on a number of action-packed adventures. Before long you run into a conspiracy involving the insidious monkey-people, the Murgg, and it's off to fight the brawny baboons in true hero-like fashion. And lo and behold the translation thus far is relatively reserved—big surprise considering the, uh, liberties taken in Albert Odyssey <shudder>.

The graphics are nice: hand drawn for the most part with the obligatory special effect here and there. They're splendidly colored and well-animated, but certainly nothing revolutionary. Seeing as how I'm a hand drawn art addict, though, you won't hear many complaints in this department.

The gameplay is decidedly Zelda-esque which is obviously a good thing. You collect various potions, weapons, and other RPG standbys. The puzzles are decent, if a little easy, and laid out well. Definitely a solid game for the Zelda crowd, even at this early stage.

We'll cover this one more in depth when we get a chance at a complete copy. As it stands, it looks to be a very well done action RPG, with good visuals and responsive gameplay. And miracle of miracles, it hasn't slipped once in its development schedule (something to do with a "If ya' don't complete it on time, your ass is ours" -clause in their contract with Sony, perhaps?). Bravo, Working Designs— now where the hell is Lunar?! **ECM**

P PREVIEW

PlayStation

- DEVELOPER - MATRIX
- PUBLISHER - WORKING DESIGNS
- FORMAT - CD
- # OF PLAYERS - 1
- DIFFICULTY - MODERATE
- AVAILABLE - 4th QTR



ECM
"Well, this is uncharacteristically fast."





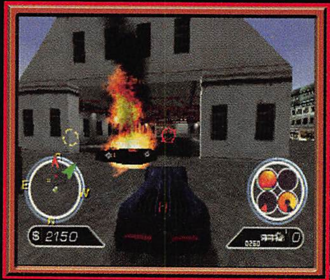




"SAY HELLO TO MY LITTLE FRIENDS"
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KIDS TO ADULTS
K-A
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Designed For N64 Rumble Pak™
NINTENDO 64
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Hey kids, are you like me? Do you secretly crave a game that offers the delight of seeing bloody tire tracks trailing after your car, post human squishage? Well, I'm afraid you can throw such idyllic dreams out the window for the bloody tire tracks that made our preview version of *Auto Destruct* so much bloody fun have been "tastefully" removed from the final. Nooooooo! Alright, so maybe it's not that big of a deal, but let's just say that the game would have been more interesting had they been left in.

In *AD*, you play a poor schmo whose wife and daughter are killed in a senseless attack (on a mall of all places) by a terrorist religious cult called The Disciples of Lazarus. Talk about a something or other! Using your supreme driving talents and allying with the good Temple and its big blue car, the time has come to teach those nasty Lazarus people what is up and who is who.



AUTO DESTRUCT

Auto Destruct is set-up as a mission-based game, with specific objectives that need to be completed before you are allowed to move forward. Every "mission-based" cliche is on display here; you've got your escort missions, package/person retrieval, search and destroy, you know the drill. And of course, those pesky Lazarus folks are trying to stop you at every turn with their arsenal of tanks, copters, and the like. But fear not, for at your disposal (once you find them) are such destructive toys as rockets, heavy homers ("doh!"), and even lasers, all the better for taking out the Disciple's rides in great, *Die Hard Trilogy*-tastic explosions.

I liken *Auto Destruct* to a film like Speed 2- you can see where the creators have certainly done work and it's occasionally impressive (cool explosions!), but the core concept just isn't that great and the execution is somewhat lacking in finesse. Driving around in what is basically a big grid of a samey-looking psuedo San Fran and following arrows on your radar to targets while watching out for weapons is basically the whole game, mission after mission. After awhile, it becomes a little monotonous. But that's not to say *AD* is bad by any stretch. The control is fine (if lacking in precision), the game has its high points (driving into the aforementioned mall to take out some tanks is a moment of delight) and the basic driving/shooting action is decent fun. In the final analysis however, it leaves the distinct impression of simply being unremarkable. Not bad, not great, but maybe worth a brief spin. ***SD***



Get airsick with the heli-cam!!!

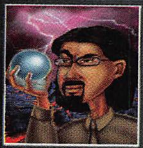




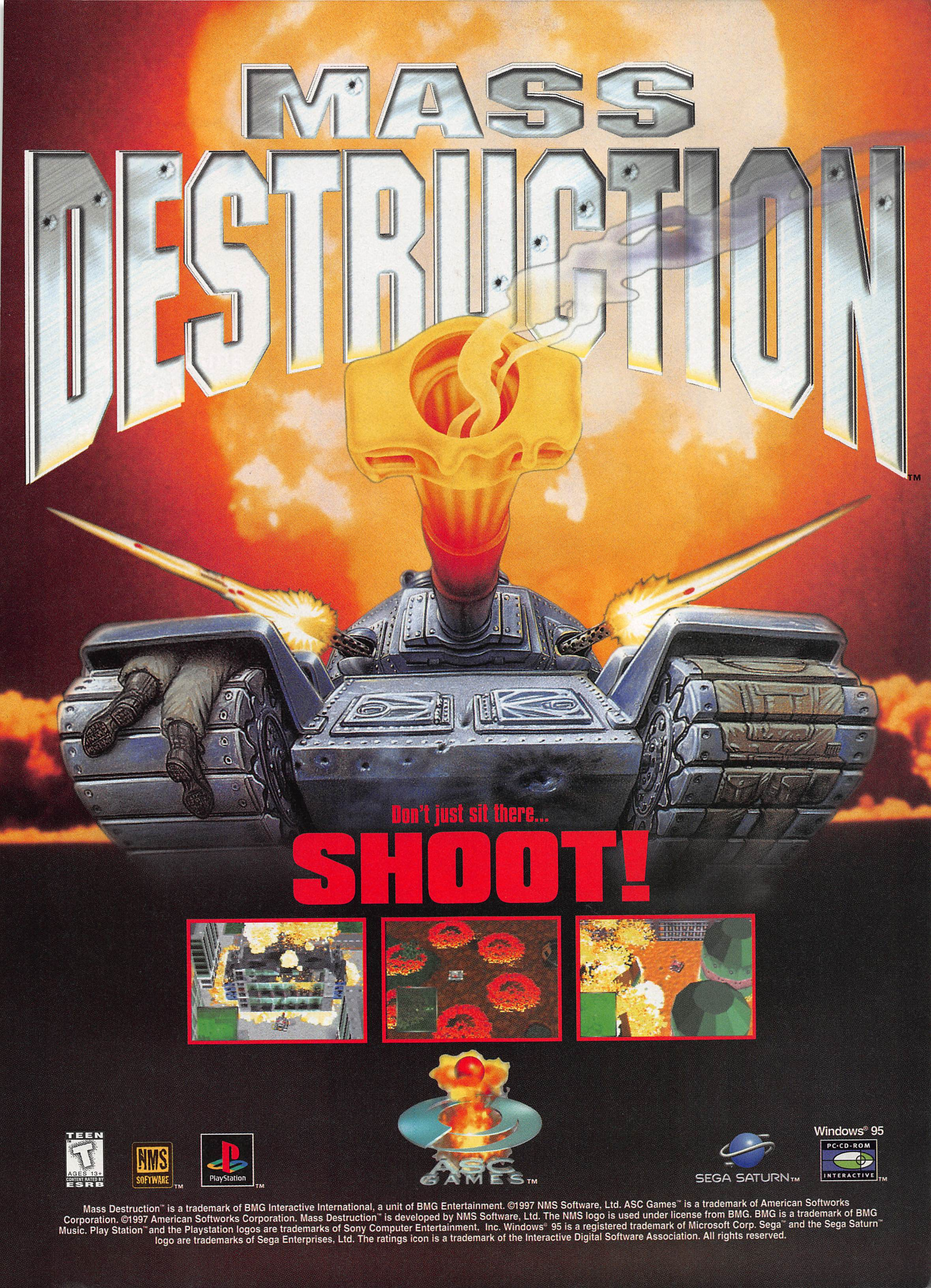
All vehicles are filled with TNT!!!

R REVIEW | PlayStation

DEVELOPER - NEUROSTONE	# OF PLAYERS - 1
PUBLISHER - ELECTRONIC ARTS	DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - NOW



SUBSTANCE D
It's like *Die Hard 11-79*


MASS
DESTRUCTION™
Don't just sit there...
SHOOT!
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Now this is getting strange: I've had the nice surprise of previewing/reviewing two great games already this month — *FF Tactics* and *C&C: Red Alert* — and now I can add another to that list. Maybe those Editor-types finally realize the depths of my awesome talent, and that I am not to be wasted on lesser titles. Then again, perhaps they're just building up my confidence only to bring it crashing down next month with something like *Rise of the Robots 3* for Gameboy or *War Gods 2*. Either way, no complaints as I have before me the rockin' *Critical Depth*. Taking the *Twisted Metal* engine to areas un**fathom**ed (ahem), prepare for a trip even Captain Nemo would think twice about taking.

"...amazingly well designed arenas in which to pillage and destroy."

Apparently Singletrac is a big fan of the old saying, "If it sells truckloads, don't mess with a damn thing", as they have made some minor modifications to the *Twisted Metal* engine and plunged it beneath the waves for some intense submarine warfare. You are on a quest for the five pods on each level that will in turn activate gateways that will allow you to continue your quest to ultimately solve the riddle of the Thresholds. There are twelve different submersibles representing one of twelve factions from various governments, environmentalist groups, treasure hunters, and secret organizations vying for supremacy across ten levels. Each character is trademark Singletrac looniness: there's Prof. Armstrong (Dr. Jones, I presume) Earth Hope (ah, Green Peace) and Dr. A. Pocalypse the prototypical mad scientist, among many others. Take your chosen sub and send all other combatants to the dark depths where Davey Jones makes his watery residence. Essentially the game plays like a

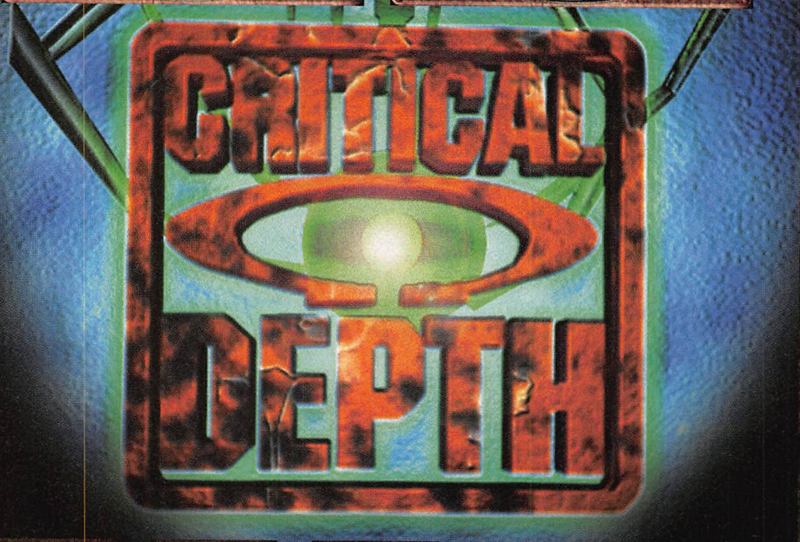




















cross between *Warhawk* and the *TM* series. You tool around the salty deep collecting power-ups and sending foes to critical depth where the pressure will crush them like Kid Fan sitting on Shidoshi. Along the way you'll collect the various pods needed to open up the Threshold and continue on. The pods themselves each represent an attribute of your sub and boost certain abilities as they are gathered; for instance, the Armor Pod upgrades your life bar. Just be aware that you're not secure with the pods until you exit a level, as you'll be constantly engaged in a vicious game of tag during which you're battling to capture and keep control of the various spheres. Once you've got all five, never look back and make a mad dash for the Threshold.

All of this is done in true *Twisted Metal* style, with tons of combat, large levels and some decent tunes. What's really great is that the level design keeps the *TM* tradition alive with some amazingly well-designed arenas in which to pillage and destroy. There are ten levels in total, and each features its own little motif; the Pacific Rim level being my favorite. In this level you cruise around a submerged city. The level is replete with towering skyscrapers and a subway system that you can actually travel through, train cars included. Once beneath the city you can hide there and wait for your opponents to take

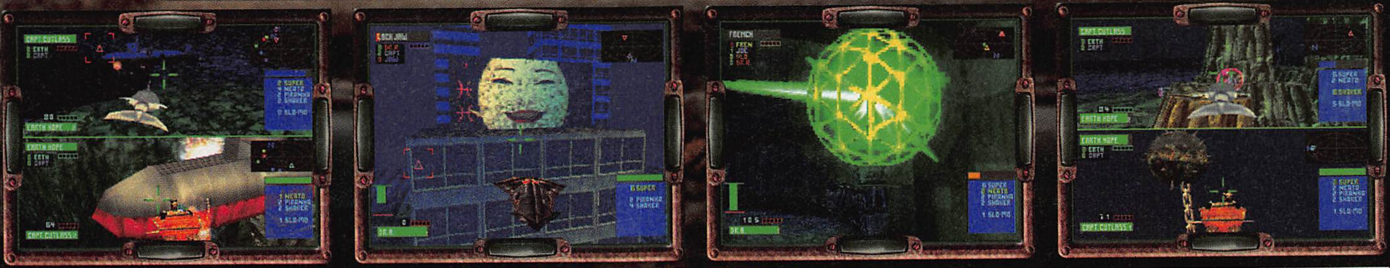


EXPLORE THE DE

each other out, then go and clean up the remnants nice and easy.

The graphics will look familiar in style to anyone that has played either of the *TM* games. Solid environments (if a little glitchy) and plenty of chaos abound. The textures are reasonably clean and the frame rate is somewhere in the mid 20s; I'm going to keep holding my breath til they can get it up above 30...urgh...ack...glub...well, maybe I'll skip that 'til next year. Let's just say that if the visuals in past Singletrac games made ya happy, you won't be let down this year (just don't expect anything radically new). Multiple play modes round out this great package: the ever popular death match is back and is perhaps the best reason to buy this game as you can send a friend to a salty end (*Ed Note: er... pardon?*). There is also the typical one-player quest mode and the ability to play with two players co-operating to obtain the pods (which tends to make the game a bit easy).

It would seem your duty is clear—Anyone that is into the whole *Twisted Metal* thing (and if you have half a brain, you are) will enjoy this game as much as a big barrel of rum and a lusty wench (not too *lusty*, though). Pick up a copy and fire at will, captain. ***ECM***

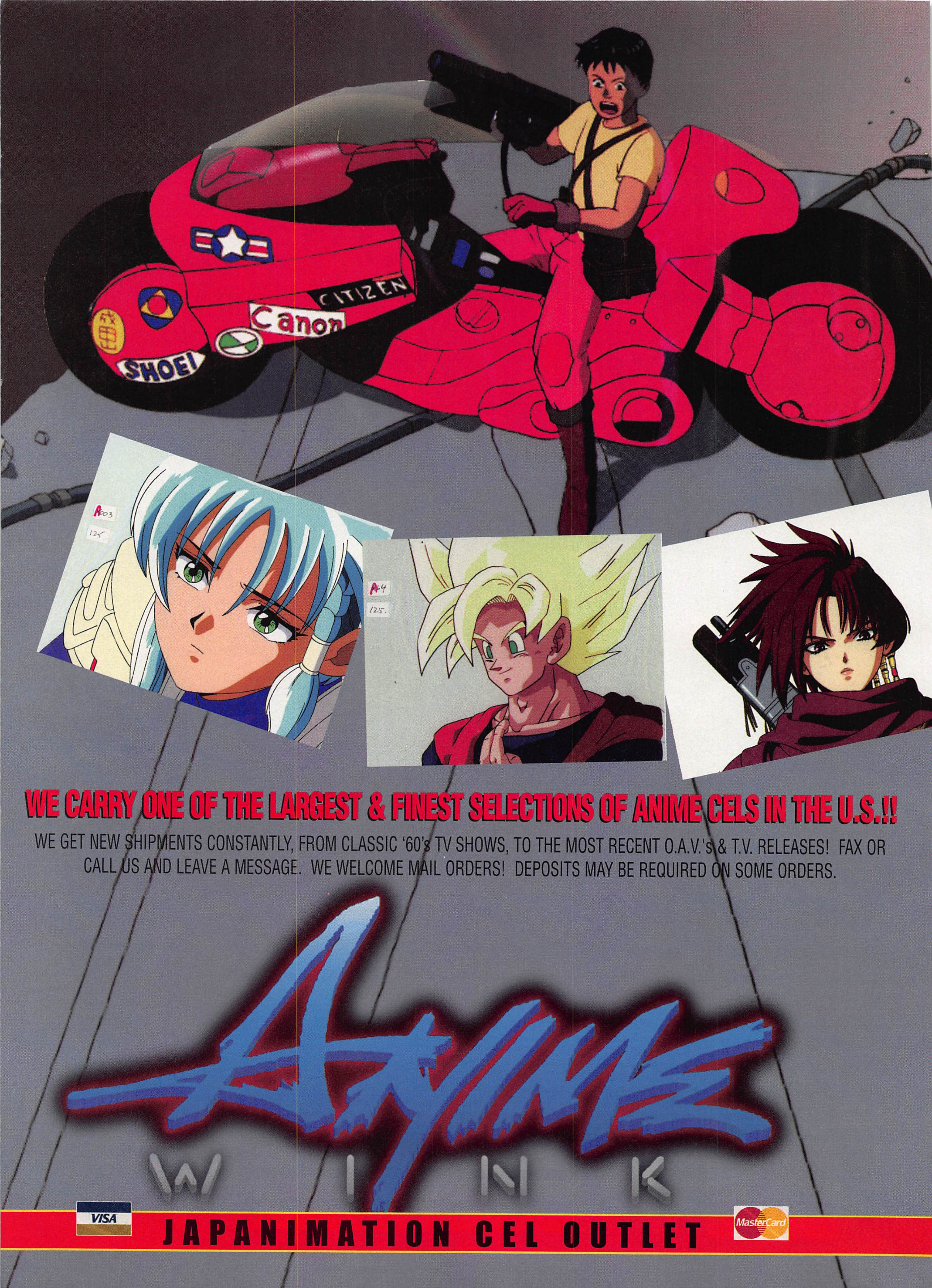


R REVIEW | PlayStation

DEVELOPER - SINGLETRAC	# OF PLAYERS -1-2
PUBLISHER - GT INTERACTIVE	DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - DECEMBER



ECM
<Glub>,
<glub>,
<glub>


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Classic Anime

Astro Boy
Kimba, the White Lion
Gatchaman (G-Force)
Princess Knight
Mighty Orbots
Speed Racer
Galaxy Express 999
Captain Harlock

O.A.V., T.V. & Movie

Akira
Angel Cop
Armitage III
Ah! My Goddess!
Appleseed
Battle Royal High School
Black Magic M-66
Bubblegum Crisis
Bubblegum Crash
Blue Seed
Bastard
City Hunter
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Cobra
Cyber City Oedo 808
Cyguard
Cutey Honey (TV)
New Cutey Honey
Dangaioh
DNA
Dirty Pair
Dirty Pair Flash
Dragonball Z
Detonator Orgun
El-Hazard
Fatal Fury
Fist of Fury
Gall Force Eternal Story
Gall Force Earth Chapter
Ghost in the Shell
Rhea Gall Force
Gundam 0083, F-91, MS08
Gundam Victory & Wing
Zeta Gundam
Double Zeta Gundam
Char's Counterattack
Hakkenden
Iczer / Iczerion
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Kabuto
Kimagure Orange Road
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Macross 2 & 7
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Ninja Scroll
Nuku Nuku
New Gatchaman
Orguss 1 & 2
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RED ASPHALT

Thula's Gold!



For my bidding I always choose female characters. In fighting games and wherever they're available video game babes (they are after all, man made) possess serious skill. Just look at all this stuff! Don't 'shag' Thula Crimstone though, she might take a souvenir!

R REVIEW

PlayStation

- DEVELOPER - INTERPLAY
- PUBLISHER - INTERPLAY
- FORMAT - CD
- # OF PLAYERS - 1
- DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
- AVAILABLE - NOW



E. STORM
Thula says come git some, if you've got the cahones!






There are those who would play *Red Asphalt* for a short while, think that the game is all about shooting the car directly in front of you (and that it's way too hard), and then swiftly make a b-line for the return counter. Admittedly, even I found the learning curve curious. However (I say that a lot don't I?), after an hour or so of proper leveling up and first world analysis I soon found myself in the middle of a deep racing circuit rich in intense racing, skillful weapon deployment, precise preparation, and a healthy dose of evil do'ins.




Besides these fatal attractions you'll also notice (take a look around sonny) you're driving in one of the best put together racing engines ever exhibited on the PlayStation, a console that's no stranger to the breed. Huge polygonal environ-













ments littered with complexity and metallic graphics surround you as you whisk along at an always respectable frame rate complete with pyrotechnics that would make John Woo say "hot -stuff!" (I don't know if he actually says that but I'm sure he's often thinking it).

One needs to keep in mind that *Red Asphalt* took nearly three years to make. It's not your ordinary 'slide into the cockpit and floor it' racer. Rather, it's an exercise in balance between your driving skills preparation techniques. Once you find the sweet spot, trust me people, *Red Asphalt's* a kick in the ass. The music is pleasingly assaulting, adding to the hellacious screen play which unfurls like Mad Max on crack. So toss all those rookie reviews you've red aside (after noticing they show screens from, like, two tracks... slackers) and take my word for it. If you possess patience and skill, *Red Asphalt* is certainly a game worth investing some quality time in. Oh, and I almost forgot, remember to take some time to check out all the goodies at your disposal, especially the commercials you can select for each car, I'd just say stop and smell the roses but hey... They don't grow grow pansies in Hell!! ***ES***



Mid pack, lap 2, I plan my next move... Kill 'em all and never look back!!















Available at an outpost near you!

You just can't escape advertising. Even in the dark dank worlds portrayed in RA, people gotta' buy stuff. I wonder if they have Spice Girls... drink Pepsi... Eat Taco Bell...wear Depends... and take pictures further.



Cardinal Syn

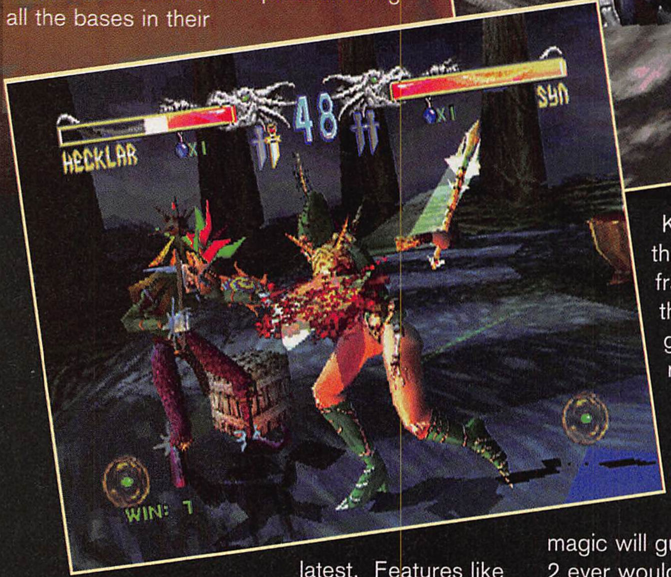
After suffering the agony of Vs. last month, I was looking forward to a nice long holiday from the whole 3D fighting genre. Figuring that with the new year fast approaching and the traditional lack (OK, so it's a total void) of games in the cold winter months, I actually thought I might not see another until next spring. Alas, it wasn't meant to be as Cardinal Syn landed on my desk today. Muttering under my breath I set forth to preview the latest in 3D fighting extravaganzas, even at the possible cost of my always tenuous sanity.

This is the latest from the team over at Kronos: Ya' know, the chaps that gave us the unforgettable Criticom and slightly less forgettable Dark Rift on N64. Now, before you start turning the page in disgust let's give it a chance, shall we? Good...

Taking the best elements from some of the most recent 3D fighters, Kronos has made an ambitious attempt at covering all the bases in their latest. Features like weapons based blood-letting (Mace), full 3D movement (a la Bushido Blade) and environmental hazards add to the somewhat appealing melange of gameplay ideas. They certainly have a veritable panoply of gaming ideas, but how does it stack up at this early stage?

The engine is decent, with a steady frame rate in the low 20s and some nice lighting effects sprinkled throughout. The characters, garbed in what looks like a cross between Soul Blade and Mace attire, move decently— although the motion capture is a bit on the marionette side as of yet.





Keeping in mind the early nature of things, hopefully they can crank the frame rate up to a full 30, smooth out the movements, and fix the terribly glitchy camera which MUST be repaired before release.

In any event, it looks as if Sony may have a possibly decent title here. Of course the combination of blood (fatalities are planned... argh), polygons and Sony's insane marketing magic will guarantee that it sells better than Tobal 2 ever would even if they had the sense to release it here; which they don't. Anyway, we'll be back in the not so distant future with more artery slitting antics—you may turn the page now.

ECM

PREVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - KRONOS

PUBLISHER - SCEA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - 1ST QTR. '98



ECM
Hey look! Another 3D fighter!



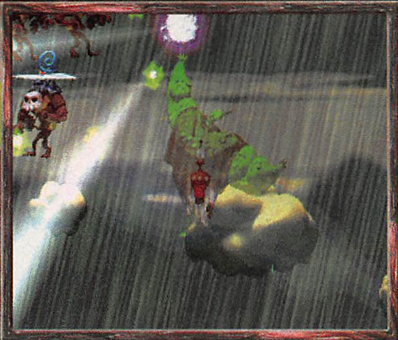




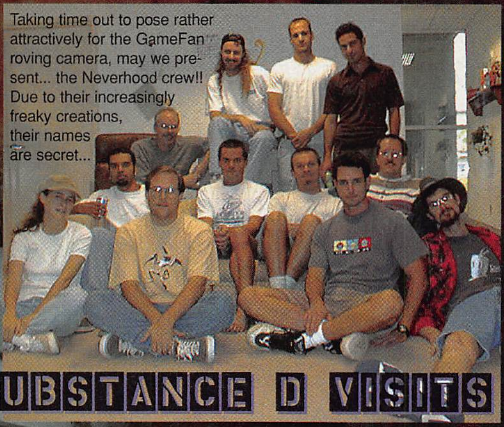


DNN
DIEHARD NEWS NETWORK



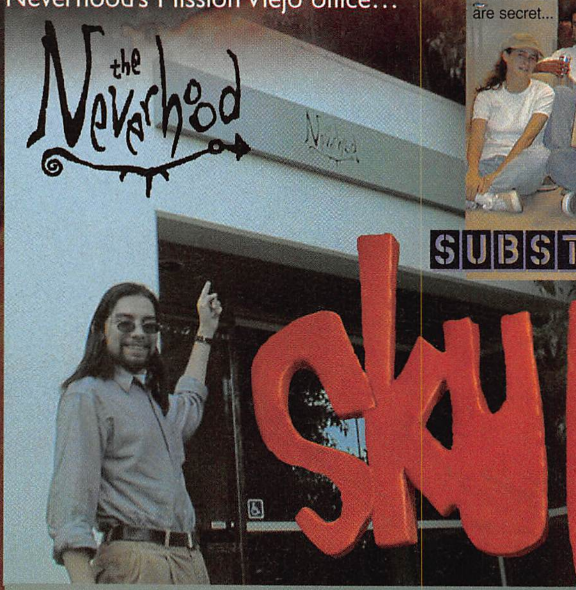


With recording equipment in hand, Substance D and Glitch took a drive down to the Neverhood to take a peek at a virtually complete *SkullMonkeys* and to speak with the co-creator of everyone's favorite anthropomorphous earthworm, Doug TenNapel. He graciously sat down with GF for a bit to talk about his upcoming plans and general musings on the state of play today from Neverhood's Mission Viejo office...



Taking time out to pose rather attractively for the GameFan roving camera, may we present... the Neverhood crew!! Due to their increasingly freaky creations, their names are secret...





SUBSTANCE D VISITS THE NEVERHOOD

SkullMonkeys

GameFan: What are your future plans on this, the eve of SkullMonkeys' completion?

Doug TenNapel: Our next project will be dictated by whether we decide to do 3D or 2D. If it's 2D, it'll have a lot of animation and a lot of character and personality. If it's 3D, you'll be able to look around a lot.

GF: Now if it's 2D, are you going to go with the clay again?

DT: Nope. We want to go back to cel animation.

GF: Really?

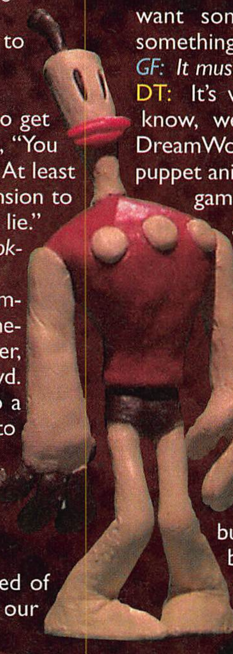
DT: Which we're probably going to get even more flak for. They're like, "You want to do 2D *and* cell animation? At least the clay animation had some dimension to it. It's just not where our interests lie."

GF: What kind of theme are you looking at?

DT: Um, it depends. If we do a comedy, it dictates a certain kind of gameplay. If you do an action/platformer, you're speaking to a different crowd. I think we're definitely going to do a game that's a little better suited to our apparent audience. I don't really know how to put it a better way than to say that we're going to dumb it down a bit.

GF: Oh?

DT: Just because I think we're tired of presenting these great things for our audience and they're just going, "We don't want that, we don't want that." They say it with their mouth, they say it with their wallets, they say it with how they respond to the game reviews and we're just going, "You know, we believe in doing this, but if you're saying you want something different, we'll give you something different."



GF: It must be frustrating?

DT: It's very hard, it's very hard. Um, you know, we're being asked by Disney and DreamWorks to do features for them with puppet animation, and we're sitting here doing games for an audience that's just kinda goin', "More blood, more [breasts], less gameplay, that's what we want." And we kind of came to that realization towards the end of this game. Everyone loves playing it, but they almost apologize for liking it. People are going, "It's so fun—too bad it's not gonna sell anything." So, I don't understand. And DreamWorks and EA got behind *Lost World* like nobody's business. They put a gabillion dollars behind it and said that it was going to be the highest rated game in the world, and we said, "Put some marketing dollars behind this game, all right."

GF: A game that actually plays well.

DT: A game with the gameplay, that missing element that they say they're all behind and all about. And uh, they're not doing it. Plus, people aren't going to like you're product today if it's not 3D, no matter how bad the 3D is! They don't care if it's good or bad. It can look like the most disfigured polygonal mess you know, but dammit, it's 3D and look how cool it is. I don't want to make any promises, 'cause we might find that our 3D engine just sucks, but we're going to try it. The other thing is that it's at least an 18 month design schedule, which means that we miss Christmas next year, and we come out possibly in the PlayStation's last year.

GF: And the state of 3D engines is very high now.

DT: Yeah, we'd be competing with the best 3D guys in the world.

GF: Would you have to bring in new staff, or do you have the talent here?

DT: Oh, they could do it here. These guys are brilliant. Three of the ten owners are programmers.

GF: Are they itching to do 3D? Do they have ideas they want to explore?

DT: Excellent ideas. I mean, gameplay-wise, I'm excited about what we could do with 3D and that's the only reason we would even con-



KLAYMEN

sider it. It's gonna be cool, but I just don't think that we've exhausted 2D yet.

GF: What about a Pandemonium-style game?

DT: Um, if we're going to do 3D, we're going to go all the way and make it free roaming.

GF: Will you still go for the humor if you go 3D?

DT: Humor is something that we'll always have, so if it's action, it'll be an action-comedy and that's what part of the challenge is. I really can't think of much 3D that has a lot of personality to the character. Most 3D artists aren't sophisticated enough with the software to be able to dictate good expression with the polygons. It's not an expressive medium. It's made to convince you of volume. So um, I think we're good at characters that have expression, and being full of personality. I personally am just going to have to experience it to see how it's going to come out in 3D. It might just not be there because it's impossible. Our priorities are always gameplay first, character development second, and all the visual whiz-bang third.

GF: That runs counter to the way many games are made.

DT: Yeah: "We got it running at this many polygons per second!"

GF: And then they think about the gameplay elements.

DT: If we can get a Joey the Sandbag character working on screen in the right level, we can make great gameplay out of it. So maybe it'll just be a sandbag, but it's going to have good character and it's gonna play well.

GF: What are your thoughts on the next generation of systems?

DT: I can't wait to get on the next generation of systems. And if we find that these people just want to settle for more crap, we'll probably end up going into features. DreamWorks are asking us, you know, "Please come do stuff, whenever you're ready," and we're just going, "Well, our number one is being in games, that's what we came here to do. We came here to bring entertainment to games and make the games funnier." The side of us that are gamers are just going, "Why does everything on the Sony have to be so dark? Why can't people have fun and be fun and not take themselves so seriously?" People respond to the humor, that's kind of our door in. That's how people say, "We like this game, we want to play it." They get sucked in by the humor and I'm almost upset that they're not sucked in by the gameplay. I know we could make a gorier game than everyone else if we chose to go that route. I know we could make a better sci-fi game, I know we could out-do them, one-up them, but it's a cheap shot. It's like the comedians that see how many curse words they can cram in. They'll [curse] as much as they can, but then someone like [Jerry] Seinfeld comes in and does clean humor with well written jokes, and he's far better because he did his job. You know, I'm inspired by games like *Parappa*. That game just freaks me out how weird it is. It came from Mars, and I respect that far more than something like *Blasto*. And I'm good friends with the character designer on *Blasto*. We started together on Saturday morning animation and his character design is excellent. I just don't think the gameplay is there yet.

GF: By the time your next game comes out, whatever it may be, you're going to be dealing with a market where the Sega Whatever will be out or just around the corner.

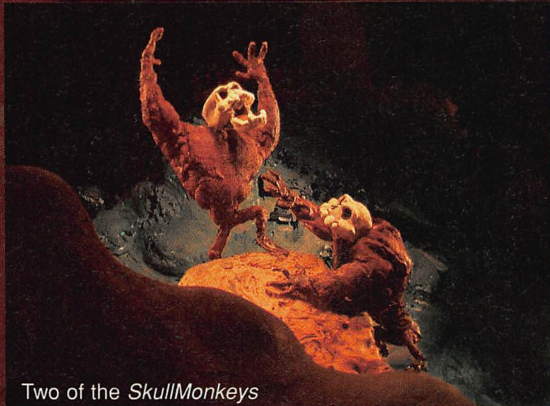
DT: Oh yeah, but for us as a developer, there was only the choice of either working on the PC or on the PlayStation. As for the Nintendo, as a developer, I can't afford to do that, I can't eat it that way and they don't treat us well enough. And as for Sega, we were huge Sega fans coming off the Genesis, and between the 32X and the Saturn, they just changed. You know, I can only make one game, and do you think I'm going to place that bet on the next Sega platform? Hell, no.

GF: Would you prefer to do PC?

DT: I'd rather do PC. If I wasn't doing Sony, I'd definitely be on PC. But I'd rather take a risk on a year old Sony PlayStation than I would on a new Sega system. It just doesn't make good business sense—I don't trust Sega to support it. You know, they'll come out with an add-on, a band-aid, and not support that with games either.

GF: It would be different in Japan, right?

DT: Yeah, actually. Our platform games are huge in Japan and we've talked about having that be our lead skew and change our story to fit their demographic, change our character designs, and if that's where our audience is, then I guess we're going to make Japanese video games. It's like they're our fans. They're dying for *Neverhood I* over there. We get fan mail that we can't read. Well, I think it's fan mail (laughs). And the same company that put out *Neverhood* over there is also bringing out *SkullMonkeys*.



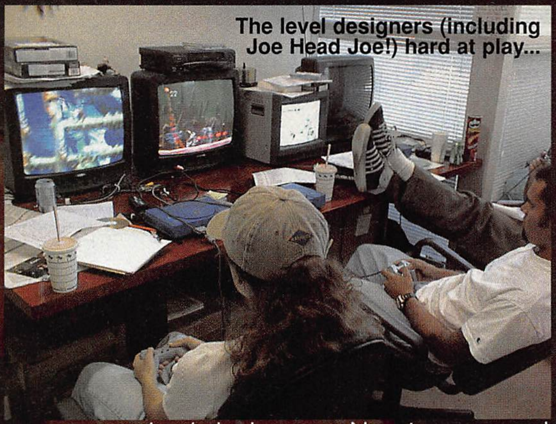
Two of the *SkullMonkeys*

GF: Who's that?

DT: It's a company called RiverhillSoft. They're huge—I mean, *SkullMonkeys* is huge over there already.

GF: Good to see, yes?

DT: Oh I'm happy. There's enough of a user base there to be profitable. We'll break even just with the Japanese. With us, if we don't break even, if we have one bad year, it's all over. We were lucky. In our first year, we barely broke even. Now in our second year, it depends on how *SkullMonkeys* goes, but it should do pretty well. For us, we have a low overhead, so we don't have to sell tons of copies to be profitable.



The level designers (including Joe Head Joe!) hard at play...

GF: If you decide to go with cel animation for your next project, what kinds of things are you envisioning?

DT: Oh man, because of the compression ratios, we can get so many more frames of animation. If it's cel animation and 2D, I know the gameplay will be stupendous, it'll be a huge, wonderful game. If it's 3D, I really have no idea what we're going to do. It's gonna be dang good, but we'll just have to see.

GF: It must hurt to know that you could make the most awesome 2D game, but no one wants to see it.

DT: I sat there and waved *SkullMonkeys* in front of DreamWorks' upper staff, and just said, "This game is ten times better than *Lost World*, and you're putting less than a tenth of the marketing behind it. There's something wrong with this company."

GF: How did DreamWorks react to that, a company that prides itself on being talent driven?

DT: They were actually very cool about it, they take a lot of crap. We have an excellent relationship with them. You know, they pay us, they don't tell us a thing to do, they just have heavy suggestions, some which we follow, some that we don't. Um, Jeffery [Katzenberg] and Steven [Spielberg] play every game and give us their critique.

GF: So Spielberg himself has played SkullMonkeys*?*

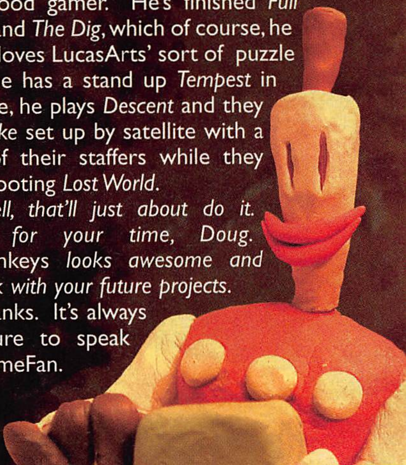
DT: Oh yeah, we send him burns to play on his blue PlayStation, and he plays them at home.

GF: Is Spielberg attuned to games enough to see why SkullMonkeys *is good and something like* Lost World *is not as good?*

DT: I think Steven can tell. He has to know, he's a good gamer. He's finished *Full Throttle* and *The Dig*, which of course, he did. He loves LucasArts' sort of puzzle games, he has a stand up *Tempest* in his house, he plays *Descent* and they had *Quake* set up by satellite with a bunch of their staffers while they were shooting *Lost World*.

GF: Well, that'll just about do it. Thanks for your time, Doug. SkullMonkeys *looks awesome and good luck with your future projects.*

DT: Thanks. It's always a pleasure to speak with GameFan.



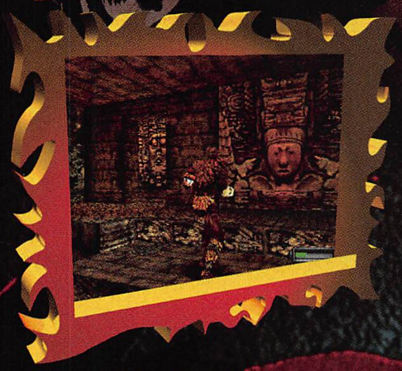
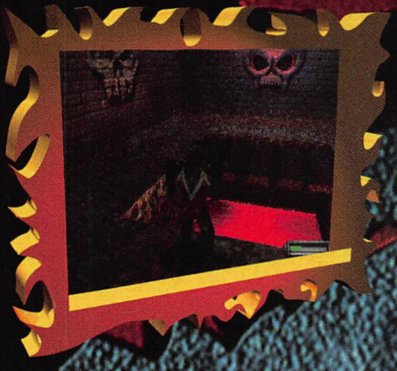





Todd McFarlane's *Spawn* series is a multi-industry juggernaut, crushing smaller comic heroes under its mighty boot. Upon its debut, fickle comic book fans made it the number one selling title of all time. Then came other, more important, conquests. An animated series on HBO (one with a much more adult feel), an extremely prolific toy line (of which GF HQ is riddled with), and even a motion picture that met with some limited success. This places it into the lofty realm of insanely successful licensed properties that spawned (ahem) from the comic book industry. In fact, only *Superman* and *Batman* have had similar success; not too shabby. Now we finally get his second foray into the realm of video games (it first appeared on the SNES, also from Sony), the most important test for any comic hero, and one that is strewn with the corpses of failed comic to game translations. Is the 3D power of the PS enough to deliver a game that Spawn fans want? Well, cinch that cape, rattle those chains and prepare to sell your soul...

Spawn is a 3D action adventure straight outta the *Tomb Raider* school of game design, with some *VF*-style fighting thrown in for good measure. The basic idea is to take Spawn through multiple eras (prehistoric and medieval, among them) solving various puzzles and doing battle with the fools that are brainless enough to stand in the path of a demon on the rampage.

While the free-roaming portions are practically identical to many other action adventure games (find this to open that, and so on) the combat portions are a little different. It seems Sony has opted for a more fighting game style presentation that has the action sequences cutaway to a *VF*-style 3D fighter. From there you engage in your typical fighting game

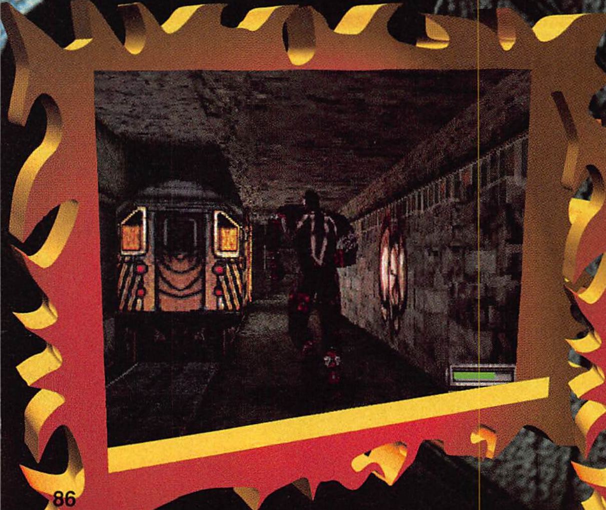



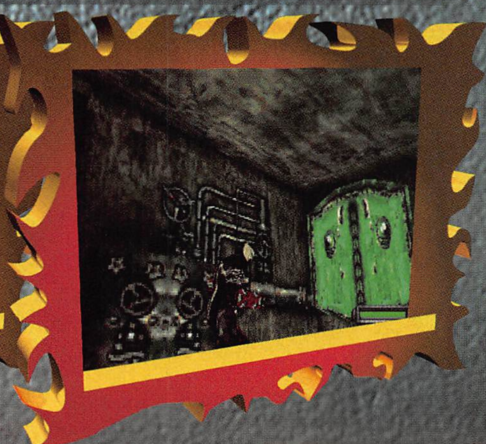
SPAWN

BATTLE LEGIONS OF SPAWN'S FOES ACROSS MULTIPLE ERAS IN A *TOMB RAIDER* MEETS *VF*-STYLE QUEST!!!

HELL-SPAWNED ENVIRONMENTS...

Each set of levels in *Spawn* takes place in a different era in time, and features a different incarnation of Spawn. You travel across prehistoric eras (replete with cave men and various primates), a cool medieval set (battle trolls and the like), and of course the modern day. Each set of levels has its own obstacles to overcome and the aforementioned different types of enemies. All the levels share in common the fact that they are of the standard action/adventure mold, unlocking various puzzles to travel further into the game. Most of these consist of finding ways past doors and other items that bar your progress—including, of course, the occasional boss or very stubborn enemy. Along the way, be sure and smash all the boxes and such littering the playfield as they contain a wealth of power-ups that will make life (or undeath) that much simpler.







READY...FIGHT!!!

Along with standard 3D adventure game elements, *Spawn* incorporates a trim downed fighting engine, a la *VF* and many other 3D fighters. Whenever an enemy is encountered, the action segues into a mano-a-mano fight. Here you can beat the hell (literally) out of your opponent while casting various spells (flame, ice, etc.) and generally just causing your enemy a world of hurt. Spawn's cape is a nice weapon and those chains of his can whip out and leave some nasty scars on unwitting foes.







fisticuffs, with life bars and so on. You get to utilize Spawn's necroplasmic powers with fireballs and iceballs. And for those of you that prefer a more visceral thrill, you can tear off an opponent's arm with a cartilage and bone shearing (not to mention blood spraying) yank, and proceed to beat an enemy senseless with their own limb—I can just hear all the *MK* fans salivating over that prospect.

It's an interesting attempt at a decent fighting engine, but the ultimately clunky control makes it really difficult to come to grips with. I had quite the expectations for this, especially after Sony pulled it back post-E3 to do some serious tweaking, but it looks as if the fighting portions needed some more time in the shop.

Some other negatives that must be addressed: When did Spawn more resemble the Hulk than Spiderman (everybody knows he's modeled after everyone's favorite wall-crawler, right?). In this game he's a beast, with huge shoulders and no neck. It's as if he went on a cycle of steroids, and was beefing up for a body-building contest. Other than that, the control (overall) needs a bit more tweaking so that it's a lot less chunky and a lot more responsive.

Anyway, this one has been a long time in coming, and Spawn fans will no doubt revel in it. The rest of you, however, should take a good hard look at this one as with a game like *Tomb Raider 2* around there really isn't room for lesser titles in the same club. Maybe next time, but for now stick with the toys and comics—at least they may be worth something in a few years... ***ECM***







R REVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - SISA

PUBLISHER - SCEA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

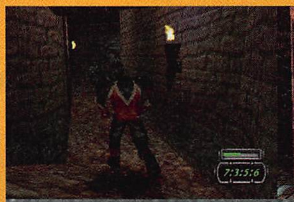
DIFFICULTY - MODERATE

AVAILABLE - DECEMBER



ECM

Hul... err, Spawn smash!!

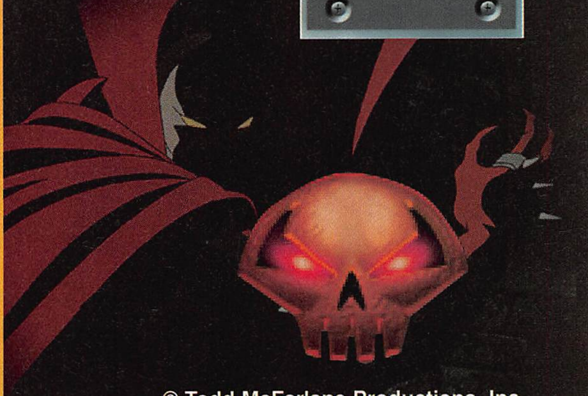






INCARNATIONS OF SPAWN...

As with the different eras in the various levels, a variety of Spawn appear down through the ages. There's cro-magnon Spawn ("Me whack silly ape with hellfire."), Medieval Spawn ("Verily, I shalt wackest yon troglodyte with mine fire of hell."), and modern-day Spawn ("I'm gonna wack that ass, beatch."). Each possesses the exact same attacks and moves the same, but is textured differently to better fit in with his current locale. And again, it doesn't make a whit of difference, it's just cool to play with three different characters—although they all share the same steroid-freak look, which I (and I'm guessing most Spawn fans, right?) could do without.



FINAL FANTASY TACTICS





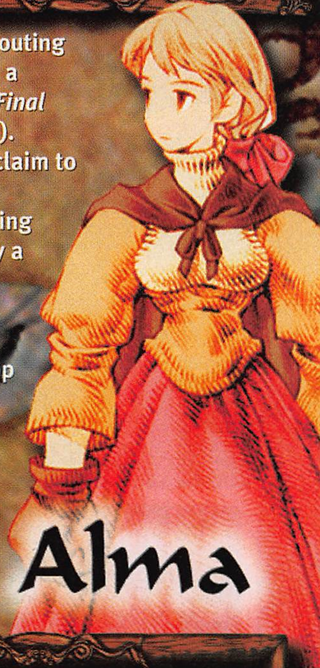


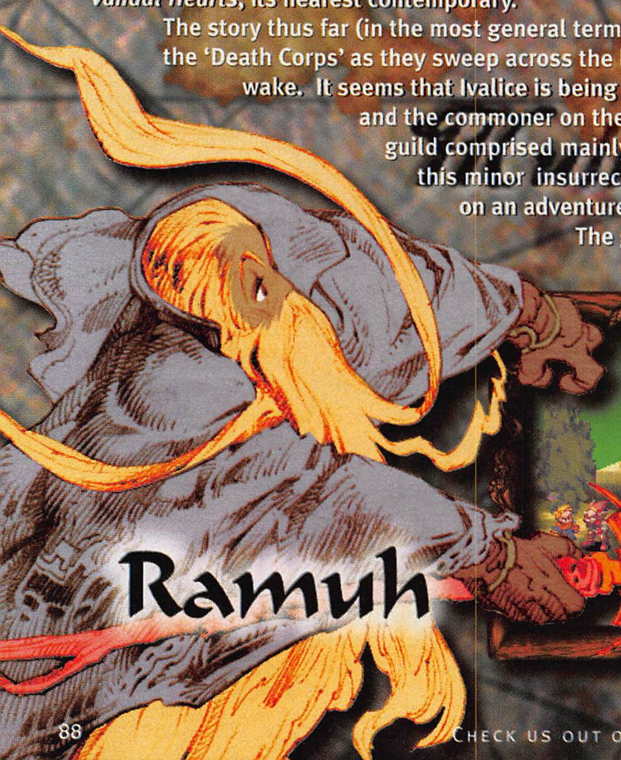
Seeing as how Nick Rox is M.I.A. (he was last seen being chased around Agoura by an angry mob shouting something about 'blue shadows' and 'missing frames') and Takuhi-san is busy rearing chocobos on a remote island in the pacific, the enviable task of previewing Square's latest epic has fallen to me. *Final Fantasy Tactics* is Square's next big U.S. release, and their first in the strategy genre (for America, that is). Developed by some of the original members of Quest (of *Ogre Battle* fame) this game may very well lay claim to the title of greatest strategy RPG of all time.

Cast in the role of Ramza, a young squire and aspiring knight, you embark on a series of adventures taking upwards of 50 hours to complete. Literally dozens of battles await to test your mettle, and it is in no way a walkthrough. Despite only playing about 15 hours total (my 50 hr. estimate comes from Waka and the import version), it is quite clear that this game is going to be an order of magnitude more difficult than *Vandal Hearts*, its nearest contemporary.

The story thus far (in the most general terms, I don't want to spoil it) has Ramza on a quest to stop the 'Death Corps' as they sweep across the land of Ivalice leaving chaos and misery in their wake. It seems that Ivalice is being torn by class warfare with the nobles on one end and the commoner on the other, and as members of the Hokuten (a knight's guild comprised mainly of the upper class) it is their job to help put down this minor insurrection. What in fact happens is it sets Ramza and co. on an adventure that dwarfs all others before it.

The graphics are utterly amazing. Featuring a mix











Insane Meteo Spell!!







of polygonal environments with sprite based characters, this title looks beautiful. The game runs at 60 FPS during battles and feature, by far, the best hardware-generated music on the PS—you'll swear it's Redbook, but amazingly, it isn't.

The only negative (there just had to be one) would be the relatively small size of the environments you fight in. It seems that in order to keep the game moving at such a high frame rate they had to sacrifice the size of areas. Sometimes it affects strategy, but overall it's a minor complaint at this point in the adventure.

In any event, this game is hot—no question about it. I'm only through the first chapter (of four) at this point and I'm having a hard time writing this as I want to play some more to see what happens next. As this is only a preview I've barely scratched the surface of this intense title. Next month we'll go to town on this one. After all, that's what an *FF7*-beater deserves, doesn't it? ECM

PREVIEW — PlayStation

DEVELOPER - SQUARE	PLAYERS - 1
PUBLISHER - SCEA	DIFFICULTY - HARD
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - 1ST QUARTER 98

ECM
Better than FF VII?

I've always been a big fan of mech combat games: 3D, 2D, and everything in between. I loved *Battletech* on Genesis; raved about *Mech Warrior* on PC; and cried tears of joy upon experiencing the might that was *Gun Griffon* on Saturn; so to say I had some pretty high expectations for Sony's first foray into the genre would be an understatement. On top of all that, it sold about a half million copies in Japan and all the import mags raved about it. As I laid my unworthy hands on a freshly burned copy, I wondered: "Was this it, the Holy Grail of mech games? Would all others before it be rendered impotent in its unrelenting glory? Would I be left a quivering mass of flesh in its awesome wake?"—Oh yeah, baby!



AC is an all-out, hyper-intense mech combat game the likes of which has only been hinted at in the feverish dreams of mech-junkies the world over. Opening with some hot CG, it grabs you straight away and doesn't let go until you're a drained and wasted husk (who needs women when you have games like this?). The graphics rage, the music is atmospheric and the storyline is great.



Essentially the story takes place in a post-apocalyptic world with various super-corporations running the world (hmm, that's not too out there). You're a member of a mercenary group known only as the Ravens which will take any job for a price and whose only allegiance is cold hard cash. What's really great is that one mission you may take a job from one corporation and the next time you'll take a mission against the one that previously hired you. All of this is conveyed through CG sequences, email and various mission objectives. It's certainly nice to see a twist on the usual post-World War 3 cliché-ridden storyline.



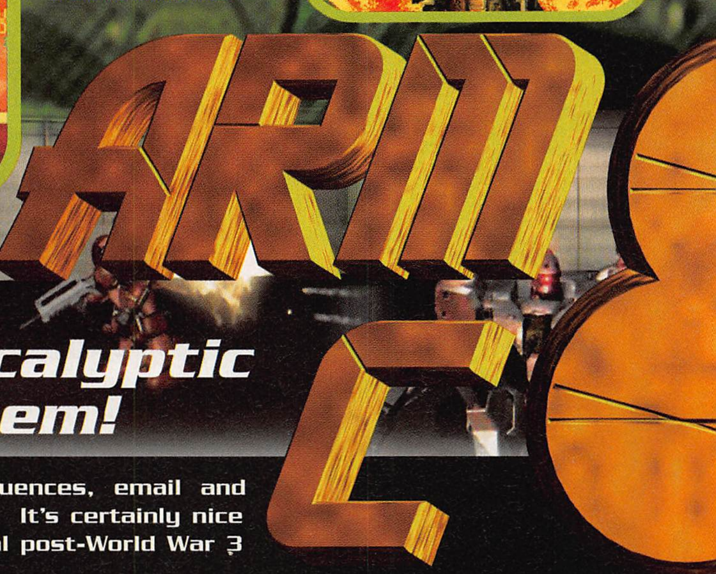






"The graphics are utterly fantastic!"





Post-apocalyptic mayhem!



The graphics are utterly fantastic and unprecedented in the history of the genre—even better than accelerated versions of *Mech Warrior 2* on PC. Featuring smooth 30 FPS animation, and solid texture mapping with little to no breakup, it's a new benchmark for this class of game. Fantastic weapon effects with some hot lighting and 'britches besmirching™' (on loan from the C. Hambleton collection) details like vapor trails on rockets and some amazing energy attacks add to the visual feast. The actual design of the 'bots in the game is impressive as well. Featuring a wide variety in type—from lowly helper robots to gigantic death machines—all scream quality and would be right at home in any mech-based anime.



The music is an odd mix of atmospheric sounds and some strange pseudo-techno clatter. It may sound a bit shoddy but actually adds to the intensity of the game. It builds with the onscreen action and gives you that sweaty palm feeling whenever something less than desirable is about to occur (like your imminent death, for example).

Gameplay is accomplished through strict discipline with the stock PS pad. The D-pad moves the mech forward and back and turns left and right; standard 3D

operating procedure. There is also a boost button which is used to fly for brief periods of time and can also be used to jet along the ground at high speeds laying waste to all in a high velocity barrage. A button a piece goes to the primary and secondary weapon as well as one for the all-important beam sword. The shoulder buttons allow strafing and the other set is for looking up and down. Although everything is relatively easy to cope with, analog would have been much appreciated if only to make the look function simpler to cope with.

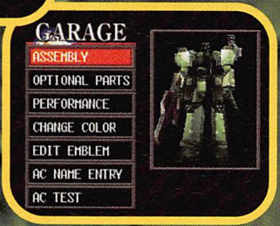
The major gameplay innovation would be the sheer number of ways you can configure a mech. By earning money through completing various missions, you can buy newer and better weapons, body parts, and engines. In fact, by the end of the game you could wind up with a mech that looks entirely different from the stock unit you started with—and this is the best part of the game. My final mech had spider-like legs, an entirely different body, and bristled with firepower—I was a one-man death machine with mayhem on my mind (uh, yeah).







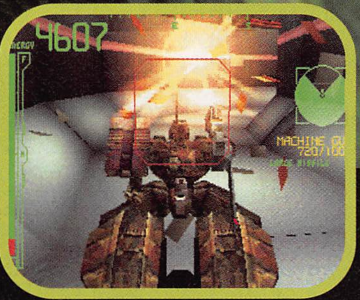

So you're having trouble getting through your latest mission and need something more in the fire-power dept? Swing by the shop and peruse the wares. Then use your ill-gotten gains to purchase that new assault rifle you've had your eyes on—and don't forget the Slurpee!



Here's where $200/hr mechanics will place that new head or other body part on your ass-kickin' mech. Don't forget to pay a visit to the paint shop for a new coat of paint and possibly your very own emblem. Oh, and keep an eye on the mechanics, they're a shifty bunch...

There is also a Vs. mode in which you can play in a number of different arenas against a friends customized mech. While it sounds like a great idea in practice, it doesn't come off as well as I would have hoped. The actual action takes place in two small windows, presumably to keep the frame rate up, and the arenas themselves are pretty lackluster. It would seem to be merely a last minute addition for hard core V-On fans—nice try, but no thanks.

That about covers it for *Armored Core*. Any and all fans of mech combat games should race to their nearest retailer (or wherever it is people actually *pay* money to play games...heh) and pick up a copy now. For the rest of ya', well, now is probably the best time to get in on some mech-madness, despite that it will spoil you for the foreseeable future. Now give me the sequel!





R REVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - FROM SOFT.

PUBLISHER - SCEA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - NOW



ECM
Heavy metal madness!











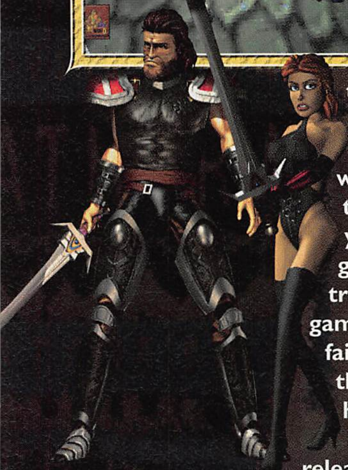




DEATHTRAP Dungeon







I usually approach an Update with two goals in mind: Discuss recent changes or improvements to the gameplay, and explore possible future additions. Naturally we also strive to bring you the best shots with all the latest eye candy. With these theories in mind, I present to you Eidos' *Deathtrap Dungeon*... a game in desperate need of help. I've tried my best to find solid, enjoyable gameplay in this latest version. I've failed. And the cool shots you see on this page? A miracle. I pray that Eidos has some kind of emergency plan for *DD*, because its scheduled December release seems impossible at this point.

Well, I suppose it's not impossible. We could somehow receive an amazingly playable final version next month with stupendous graphics and an awesome frame rate... yeah, maybe if every AM team, Namco, Square, and Konami got together and tweaked *Deathtrap Dungeon* for a month or two. At this point, so close to *DD*'s release, the game looks like it's mired in some tragic pre-alpha state. The camera system is probably the most finalized feature in the game, and even that tends to glitch out and go off-track. The textures are beyond rough, the enemies are so poorly designed it's not even funny (then why was I laughing?), and the frame rate is simply crippling to the eyes.

Strong points? Mmn...there's some cool weapons. The Venom Sword has a nice green striking blur when you swing it, and the Silver Sword is, well, silver. Your character has some incredible (uh, yeah) combos now too. Simply hold either towards, left, or right, and start pressing that single attack button over and over. Look, a big ol' 3-hit "combo" for your skillful efforts! Wow, now *that's* technique. On the plus side, I didn't mind the puzzle elements of the Circus level, with its switches, portals, and traps. Too bad it's so hard to control the game, look at the game, and, in effect, enjoy the game.

If somebody seriously operates on *Deathtrap Dungeon*, and we're talkin' a talented team of surgeons (Core, perhaps?), and if they make it a little closer to the book series (lose the guns!), there's still the potential for an excellent 3D walk-about hack-'n-slasher. It'll never be a *Nightmare Creatures*, mind you, but it's gotta be better than this. *G*



















UPDATE

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - EIDOS	# OF PLAYERS - 1
PUBLISHER - EIDOS	DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - DECEMBER



GLITCH
One broken game in desperate need of hard-Core help! Now!



· Judge Dredd ·

GREMLIN INTERACTIVE · GUN GAME · TBA

You are the law. Take to the streets of Mega City One and wipe out the criminal scum that litter the streets in the 22nd century. Take on former Tek-Judge Royston Bean as he makes a play for control of the city and the Halls of Justice. Taking gun games blazing into the realm of licensed properties, Gremlin's latest features an amazing 3D engine for intense on-rails shooting action. Lock and load your choice of light guns and prepare to level all that are foolish enough to stand in you path. Featuring smooth, motion captured movement, we're itchin' to bring ya more on this hot lookin' contender from across the pond. After you get done with *Time Crisis* you may want to get pumped for the next in line—my trigger finger is spasming just thinking about it. Oh, and the helmet always stays **on**.









· Bloody Roar / Beastorizer ·

RAIZING/SCEA · FIGHTING · FEB.

The game with multiple names has finally received an official U.S. release date: February '98, is the tentative date for this hot title from shooter gods Raizing and SCEA. This super-hot fighter features lycanthropic fighters battling it out with super-smooth 60 FPS action in fully 3D arenas. Each character can transform into a were-beast on the fly after filling up his or her power meter. It makes for some intensely strategic, graphically intense fighting. It's sorta like *Fighting Vipers* meets *Tekken* with more intense visuals. Based on what we've seen of the amazing import, Sony would be well advised to leave most, if not all of it intact. We look forward to blowing this game out next month (import) and then we'll be back with the definitive U.S. review in the coming months. With games like this, the usual post-Christmas void is going to be quite full. Oh, and please deep-six the name *Beastorizer*...urgh.









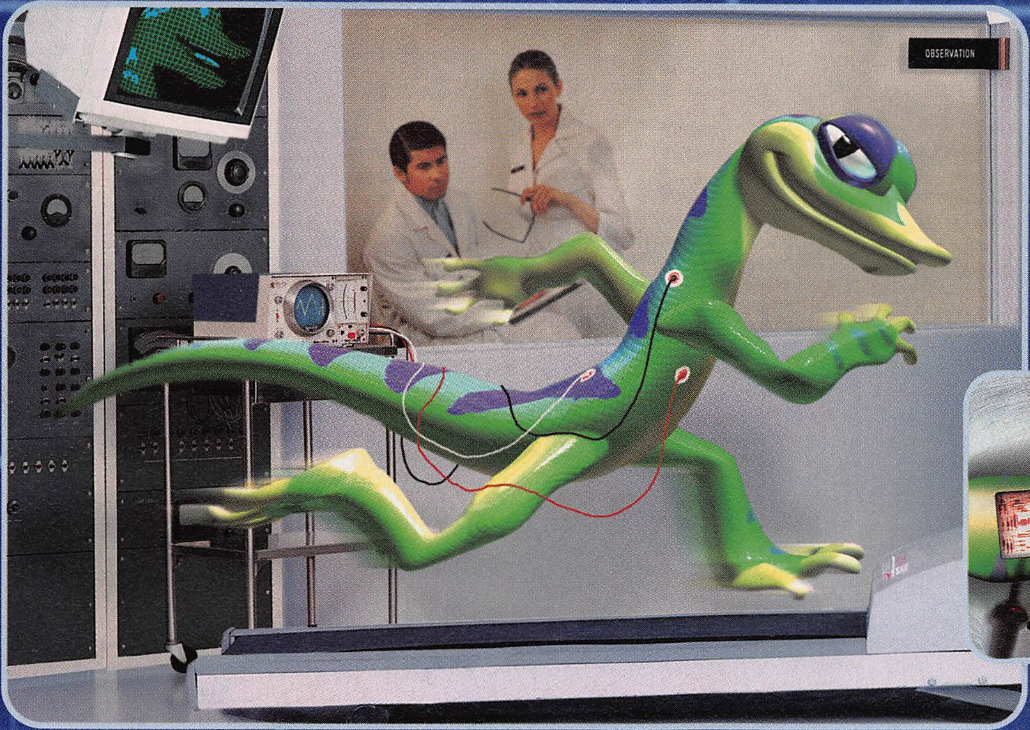




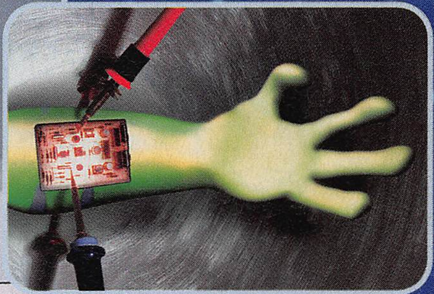




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MADE HIM STRONGER . . . FASTER . . .
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GEX: Enter the Gecko.
360 degrees of "go anywhere you want" 3D EXPLORATION! We're pushing the limits of 3D technology by combining free-roaming gameplay with brilliantly detailed graphics and special effects.



GEX is juiced with over 125 unique moves and 3,400 frames of fluid character animation. HBO® comedian Dana Gould returns as the voice of GEX, lampooning Hollywood's finest with over 500 lip-synched celebrity impressions and smart ass one-liners.









COMING SOON: PLAYSTATION

· Buggy ·

GREMLIN INTERACTIVE · RACING · TBA

Ever get that burning urge to take one of your old RC cars from when you were younger and race them around some really hot environs? Yeah, me too. And in comes Gremlin's latest to provide us with all the thrills of competitive RC car racing. Featuring some interesting locales in which to race, *Buggy* looks to be a pretty hot contender in the (very) crowded racing genre. Featuring some hot real-time lighting effects and 3D modeled cars, this one has all the makings of a good, solid game. We'll dig into *Buggy* more heavily in the coming months—it's due in the UK any day now, and should hit here as soon as Gremlin can find a US publisher for it—no worries on that score.






· Vigilante 8 ·

ACTIVISION · COMBAT/RACING · SPRING '98

Twisted Metal meets *Interstate 76* in an unholy union! In this pseudo-prequel to *Interstate 76*, the big PC smash, comes the entirely arcade-oriented version for the PS: *Vigilante 8*. Take a ride in one of twelve fully loaded, V8-powered cars as you tear around the southwest looking to put the big hurt on rival gangs. Featuring multiple play modes, including split screen for two player action, you rip across multiple huge 3D environments with real-time reflection-mapping, and of course the now obligatory lens flares. Cool, real-time cut scenes round out a pretty tight package. Oh, and of course the rockin' funk tunes which no '70s-themed game should be with out. Looks like it has what it takes to storm the extremely crowded PS racing club, and we look forward to some seventies-intense nostalgia—where are my bell bottoms and lava lamp?



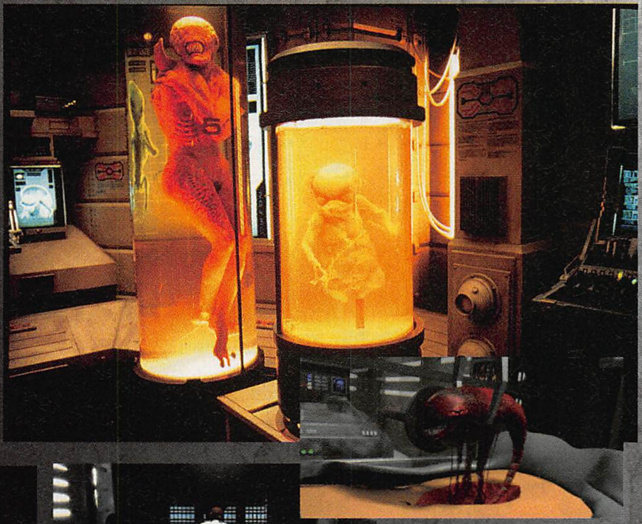
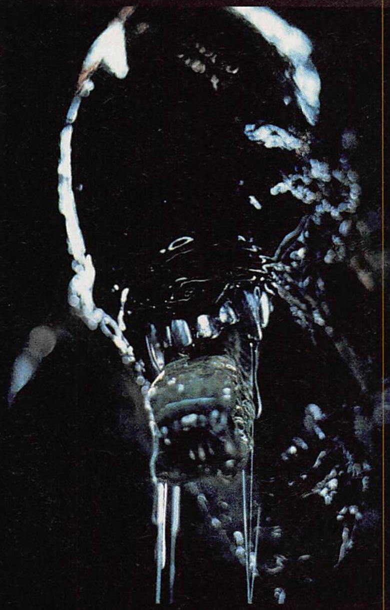




· Alien Resurrection ·

FOX/ARGONAUT · ACTION/ADVENTURE · TBA

Can this game help revive the once mighty *Alien* name? Or will it be yet another example of *Alien 3*-itis (the movie NOT the game)? From the looks of things at this early stage it has all the makings of a movie game tour-de-force! Taking the good ol' *Tomb Raider* 3rd-person perspective and chucking it headlong into a more action-oriented adventure, we can't wait to sink our teeth into a final version. Choose one of five characters and go bullet to claw with the horrific aliens from the latest film. Developed by Argonaut Software of *Starfox* and *Croc* fame, this one promises to be an intense shoot-'em-up with all the insanity of the movie. 13 levels (unlucky for you) promise that this one ain't gonna be an easy tour o' duty, but remember: In space, no one can hear you scream...








In Racing There Is Only One Position
NINTENDO 64
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UP, UP AND AWAY... WE'RE FLYIN' AROUND THE BAY!





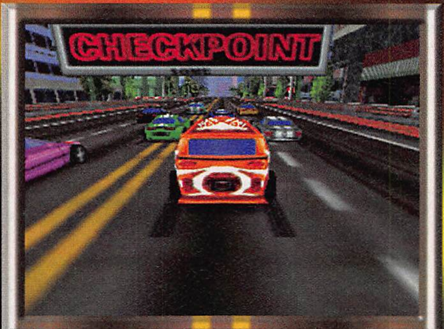
SAN FRANCISCO RUSH
EXTREME RACING



When you think of San Francisco, you inevitably imagine the Golden Gate Bridge, Alcatraz, illegal narcotics, free love, cool ramped downhill streets with a Gran Tarino weaving past trundling trams, Mamma Cass choking down a ham sandwich ('cept that was in London) and pan handlers smelling like cabbage. However, on the three occasions I've visited the City by the Bay, my car has never lifted off the ground and spun uncontrollably through the densely populated streets and burst into flames. Strange supernatural forces are at work, my friends, and coupled with seismic tremors causing a rupture in the Earth's gravitational pull, the results are akin to driving on the Moon; half the gravity, enabling odd, almost weightless jumping from every ramp. This is the San Francisco of Midway's *SF Rush*, and you'll either fall into adoration with these completely unrealistic antics completely, or howl in annoyed anguish at the transparent uncontrollability of it all...

I suppose it's all the fault of those crusty Atari programmers that Midway drafted in to help out the usual array of Midway staff. I for one, am glad that these wizened Atari folk got to fiddle with a video game after crafting the stellar *Hard Drivin'*. Yes, *Hard Drivin* had a horribly jerky frame rate that never even approached the teens and blocks on wheels that you had to pretend were cars, but you could catch some 'wicked air', and once you tired of the sheer lack of realism, there was that cow to plough down!! Well, sadly the cow's been put out to pasture for *Rush*, and the graphics have been improved considerably, but the game physics are still exactly the same!! Yes, that's right!! They're totally unrealistic!







TAKE APART THE GAME'S SECRETS AND SOON YOU COULD BE STYLIN' IN A PURPLE TAXI!!! CRAZED HIDDEN CARS TO FIND!

R REVIEW

NINTENDO64

DEVELOPER - ATARI GAMES	# OF PLAYERS - 1-2
PUBLISHER - MIDWAY	DIFFICULTY - TEDIOUSLY HARD
FORMAT - CART	AVAILABLE - NOW



CHIEF HAMBLETON
"I leeeeft my driving physics in Saaaaan Fraaancisco..."

That's not to say, however, that the game isn't fun. It is thoroughly enjoyable launching your car into the stratosphere and watching it tumble into a fiery heap. Sure, the slightest thumb twitch sends your car somersaulting, but that's what *Rush* is all about! The two player mode is fraught and frantic, the CPU controlled drivers sideswipe you constantly, and the graphics are nowhere near the quality of the arcade, but you still keep coming back for more, simply because the game's rather jolly to play. At least, until the uncontrollability of it all sends you over the edge and into *Crusin' USA* territory... Then (after around twenty hours play), you'll be unable to take the game seriously, and the fun factor takes a back seat to the general annoyance at being unable to control your 'craft'. The stress kicks in, you'll shake your cartridge until it rattles and you'll plug in *Top Gear Rally* instead. Especially after you consider that the game's 'physics' is the best feature. I've not even started on the aural abortion that professes to be the 'music'.

No game should have sound quite as appalling as this. It really defies all bounds of taste, logic and shame, and especially lodges in your gullet as the laughable 'CD player' option is in there, thus enabling you to choose your favorite 2bit 3 channel 'tune'. Trust me; turn the music off immediately and NEVER listen to it. You'll thank me if you knew just what Midway 'managed' to 'create' with their bon tempi synth and a couple of coconuts. It's as if Midway miniaturized Spencer Neilson (the deviant responsible for the *US Sonic CD* threnody) and sent him to rattle a few spoons inside your cartridge. Congratulations to the *SF Rush* programmers; you've won the coveted Hambleton "Worst Music in Video Game History" award! Collect your *Best of Yanni* from the GF offices at your earliest convenience.

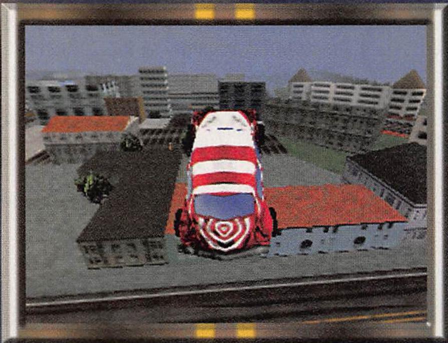


Launch your motor at just the right angle...



and you'll soon be driving into mad secret arenas!

Bottom line: Thousands of times better than *Shamblin' USA*, good and intense fun marred by fanciful game physics that you'll either love or hate, sound so bad it's shocking and a 'sub-game' too tedious to complete. I'd try out the game, as GameFan is evenly split between editors who love and loathe the airborne drifting car action present here. Decide for yourself if this appeals, as it's definitely worth a closer inspection. Less *San Francisco Rush* and more of a *San Francisco Floaty Car Tumble*. ***CH***



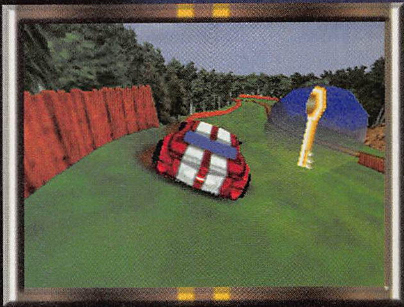




The Hambleton Files...

File No. 415-CX
Memory Allocation Commence... Key finding

In an attempt to lengthen this game's appeal, there's a total of 45 ignition keys to locate throughout the six stages. Find every key in the stage and you're presented with two shiny new motors. Locate all the keys and a new track appears. Sound like fun? Yeah, that's what we thought... What could have been an amusing way to prolong the longevity has been turned into a stressful and then downright tedious experience. The reason? The keys are too well hidden. Yeah, I don't mind hitting a grassy ramp at exactly 120 mph on exactly the correct trajectory for a key suspended high in the sky. What I do object to is accidentally launching myself through what looks to be a solid wall and finding a key lodged inside. Feel like scouring every single inch of all six tracks? Well ram every single wall you find... the keys could be anywhere... and I've got better things to be doing with my gaming time. So I gave up.

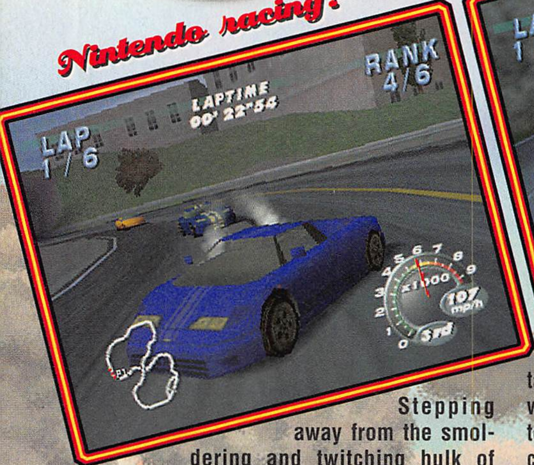


Get the Keys...
(if you have the patience)

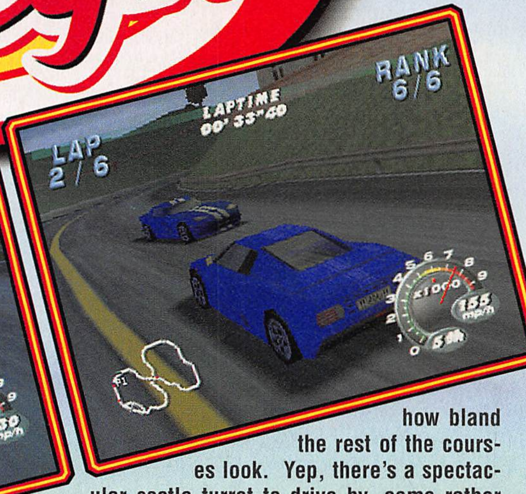
Automobili Lamborghini



Nintendo racing? Hamble time!







Stepping away from the smoldering and twitching hulk of wretched metal that was the Amiga, Titus has weathered the machine's death exceptionally well, and are now sailing back into the choppy waters of console software publishing with a stunning new Nintendo 64 racing title. And yes, yet again it has fallen on the bony shoulders of Chief "N64 racing" Hambleton to bring you gaming fiends right up to speed with this addition to the increasingly sprawling Nintendo 64 driving game library. If a game's got fast cars and blurry ground textures, you can bet ya sweet ass that the ol' prospector'll be in the driving seat!

I'd seen *Automobili Lamborghini* in semi-playable form at E3, and while I was struck with the increasingly prettier graphics on show, the lack of anything approaching gameplay ruined my enjoyment (I instead fondled the real-life Lamborghini which was also present at the Titus booth). Thankfully, the final release has gone through some pretty major track rehauling with six winding thoroughfares available for perusal. What strikes you first however, are the graphics. During the first ten minutes of gaming wonder on the premiere track, you'll be agape in shock at the sheer arcade quality of the graphics on show here. We're talking the Sistine Chapel of the video gaming world. Superbly detailed cars, and excellently texture-mapped trackside detail and buildings combine to present gob-smackingly exciting evidence of the kind of graphical power that can be unlocked in a Nintendo 64.

However, when you've halted your gaping and blubbering at all those polygons shifting about at mind-boggling rates, you're struck by how bland the rest of the courses look. Yep, there's a spectacular castle turret to drive by, some rather pleasant lens flares and a couple of ramps to fly over, but in all honesty, the cartridge format has limited the number and variation of scenery, leading to racers zipping by the same country cottage three times in one lap. And the scenic limitation doesn't end there, either. There may be six different courses, but the last three tracks use the same scenery as the first three areas, meaning you're likely to be seeing that country cottage many more times as you race the 'remix' version of the first three courses. Of course, the tracks are different, but the scenery is all too familiar...







It's the Pits!!

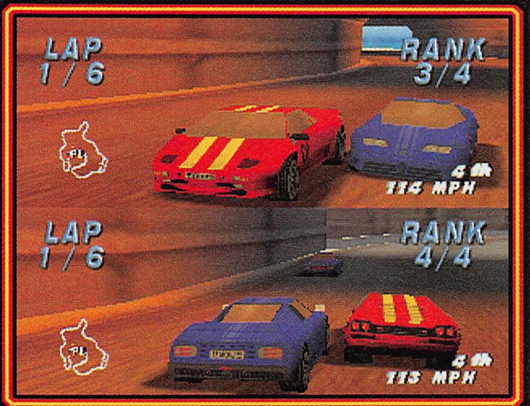


A really cool feature of *Automobili Lamborghini 64*'s courses are the pit stops. Okay, you may have seen them before in a racing game, but Titus has seriously tried something different here. Shred your tires after a particularly satisfying doughnut session, and you're warned to make a pit-stop. Zip in, and instead of drumming your fingers for 20 seconds, you must choose the amount of fuel to receive, and waggle your 3D stick furiously when the tires change. This turns into a *Track and Field* style sub-game, with particularly delirious back-and-forth wiggling resulting in a shorter time absent from the race. Of course, if you hate pit-stops, you can always turn them off...

Someone say "Multi-player?"



While playing a great two-player game (albeit with some pop-up issues and a lack of detail), this game tries very hard to deliver the much-touted four-player excitement present in previous Nintendo games. Firstly, find a television big enough to allow you to view the four minute boxes on display here. Next, choose your Lamborghini and rev at the starting grid. Then, you're off!! At least, I think that's what happened, but everything moved at such a slow rate for the first ten seconds that we thought the game had stalled. Yes, four player *Automobili Lamborghini* isn't that great, as the actual game graphics are cut down to the point of eye-squinting insanity, and the game chugs alarmingly ("Hey, are these Pintos in a Lamborghini shell that I'm driving here?!"). My so-called editor friends left me halfway through the race, remarking (rather unkindly) on the flaws present here. I'll be more tactful; do not purchase this game for the four-player option.





You'll also notice a lack of enemy drone cars to weave through. Yep, instead of the 12 standard cars present in any other self-respecting racing game, you've only got five other CPU controlled gentlemen to race against. Obviously our Lamborghini (and Viper)-owning friends are less willing to burn highly expensive Italian rubber than their Ridge Racing counterparts... Another reason may be the slowdown. From the usual 30 fps that this game runs at, you'll wince when the juddering slowdown occurs; usually when two or more other cars are vying for position. It looks like this 64-bit powerhouse was tested to the graphical limits here, especially when you race the final track and notice slowdown *without* any other cars present. However, in the game's defense, those drone motors sure know how to play dirty; they'll sway, tail-gate and generally weave into you at any given opportunity, thus leading to a swift loss of control and an altercation with a barrier. You'll also be pleased to learn that those cunning enemies try different tactics every time you race, so you never know when they'll try something underhand...

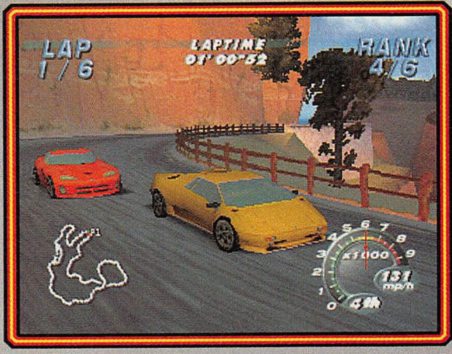


Controlling the action is certainly easy enough, but for me, it never convincingly attempted to emulate the real intenseness of wrenching a $250,000 genital-enhancer around a highway. Put simply, this is a left-right racing game; there's no friction between you and the car until you yank the 3D stick to its fullest extent (and then the car power-slides uncontrollably), meaning that once you've learned the racing line, it just becomes a matter of memorizing the track layout, flicking left and right at the appropriate moments and hoping you don't receive a sideswiping. Click onto the 'novice' setting and you'll have this game licked in two hours. Flip the difficulty to 'expert,' and suddenly the previously controllable cars spin horribly when even the simplest powerslide is attempted. The game turns into a fraught thumb-waggling war of attrition that really tests you, but the secrets unlocked are more than worth the days of agonizing gameplay.

As with every other Nintendo game not produced in a small hamlet in the middle of England, the sound is sub-standard. Nowhere near the appalling level of *San Francisco Rush*, but with one 'techno' tune throughout the entire game (save for the winning and intro songs), and bad enough to turn *waaaay* down after half an hour's play and *waaaay* off soon after that. This doesn't bother me (I just boot up my PlayStation, switch my audio speakers and slap in some *Crystal Method* while I'm racing), especially as the other sound effects are pretty cool (like the whirr of the auto-wrenches in the pits, for example).



Automobili Lamborghini is by no means a bad game, but there's an initial lack of variety in cars ("You want your Diablo in magenta or puce, sir?"), and some pretty bad 'fog' effects going on in the 'town' courses (that famous mystical barbecue that plagued *MRC* is back with a vengeance) halted my enjoyment somewhat. That's not to say I hated this game (far from it, in fact), it's just that *Automobili Lamborghini 64* is a little... bland. It lacks the longevity of *Rush*, and although the beautiful graphics keep beckoning you back for more (along with a decent two player mode and a cool pit-stop), the lack of excitement in course design halted my excursion into high-end sports car racing. Driving buffs should try (or rent) before they buy. ***CH***



R REVIEW

NINTENDO 64

DEVELOPER - TITUS	# OF PLAYERS - 1-4
PUBLISHER - TITUS	DIFFICULTY - MODERATE
FORMAT - CARTRIDGE	AVAILABLE - DECEMBER



CHIEF HAMBLETON
Ooooo... pretty graphics... now where's my gameplay?

COMING SOON: NINTENDO 64

· Snowboard Kids ·

ATLUS · SPORTS · 1ST QTR. '98

Destined for a first quarter release, *Snowboard Kids* from Atlus makes its mark a little differently than many of the other snowboarding games out there. Taking an abrupt departure from reality, you actually board down more than just snow-slicked slopes, with grass among the other more interesting surfaces. Heck, there are even shooter elements in this one! Watch for the attacking snowmen as you shoot the tube. There's even a full-on half-pipe mode for all you trickmeisters out there and multi-player madness. A full report on Atlus' latest is on its way in the not-so-distant future.









· Twisted Edge ·

BOSS STUDIOS/MIDWAY · SPORTS · 1ST QTR. '98







A bevy of snowboarding games are due to hit the N64 slopes over the course of the next few months, and here's one of the first: *Twisted Edge Extreme Snowboarding* by Midway. Designed by Boss Game Studios (of *Top Gear Rally* fame) you hit the snow on one of six tracks in a racing extravaganza. Much like *Cool-Boarders 2* on PS, you can bust a large number of tricks as you barrel down the slopes at extreme speeds. The package is rounded out with a cool-as-ice split-screen mode. We'll be back soon, with more info, just before the flood hits.

· Quake ·

MIDWAY · CORRIDOR · MARCH

Do I really need to say more? Well, seeing as how I have some space to kill, I guess I should. This is the N64 incarnation of the most popular PC title of the past year and let's just say you should be prepared to be blown away. Resembling the Open GL version from the PC (on PC 3Dfx boards) this game is looking, quite simply, incredible. Fast frame rates, hi-quality textures (on the N64, no less), and some intense, sampled sound FX, this is the one to beat. For those of you unfamiliar with it (could that be possible?), *Quake* is a first-person-perspective corridor blood bath with you cast in the role of...actually who cares about the story—Just know that this is burning hot and crushes most other corridor games under it's heavy steel-toed boots; with a two-player mode to boot. Get ready to rock!







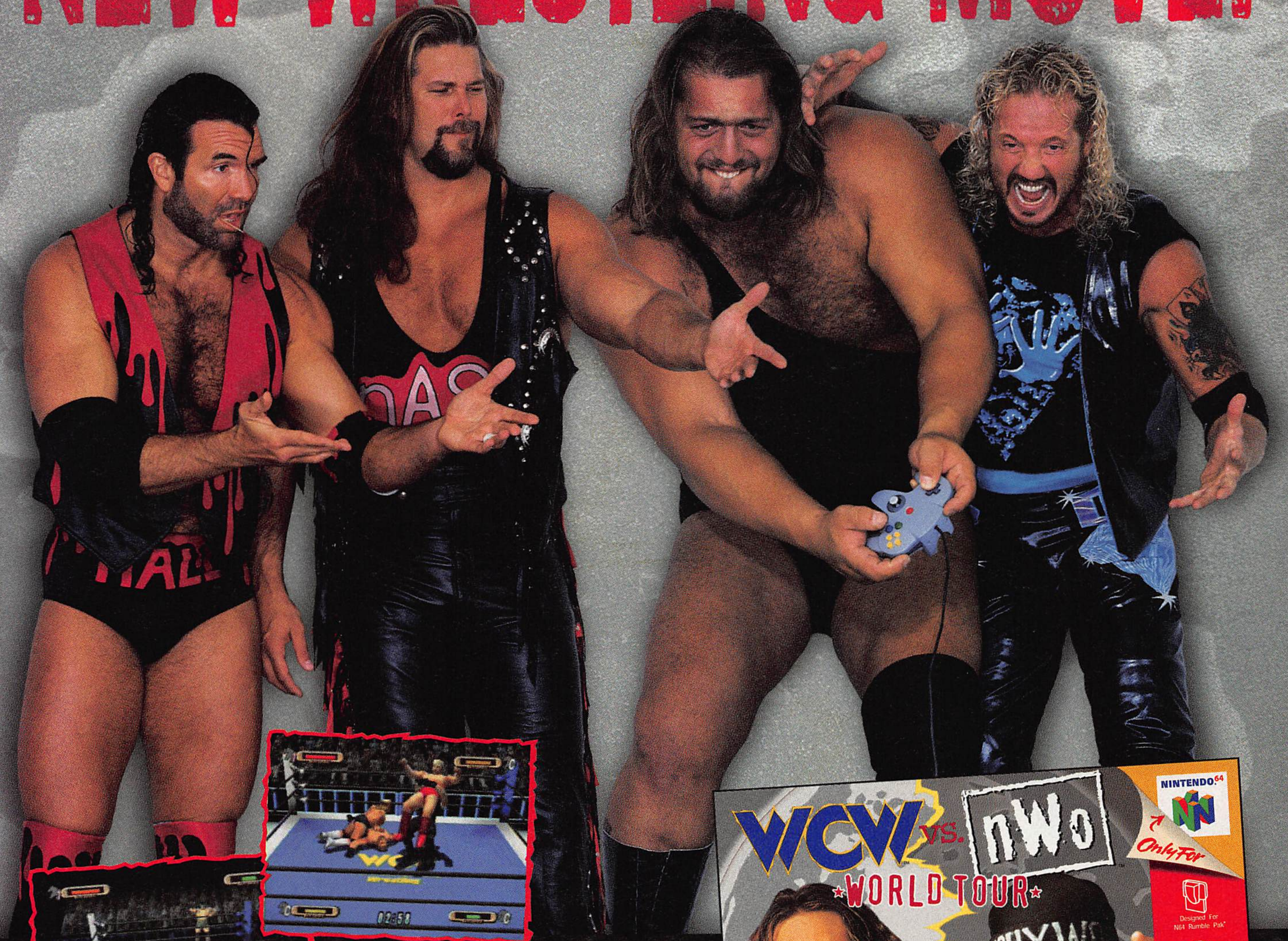






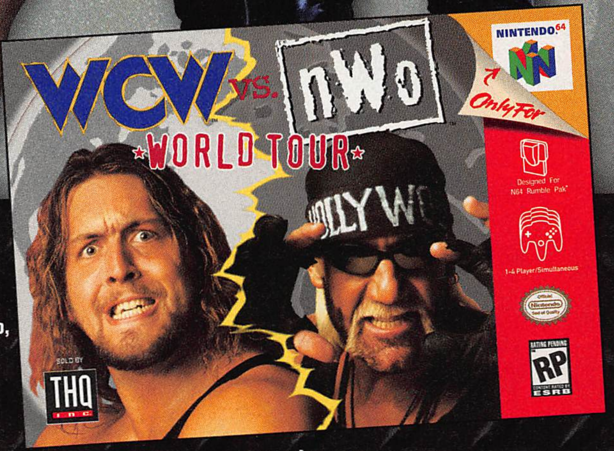


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I have faith in Lobotomy (after *Duke Nukem 3D* and *PowerSlave* who doesn't?) but I must admit, even I had doubts about their ability to port *Quake* to Saturn. Trying to fit *Quake* into a Saturn is like trying to fit *Doom* into a SNES - and you know how that turned out! I was convinced that Lobotomy had bitten off more than they could chew this time. I was convinced that, no matter how good a job they did, *Quake* would loose so much in the transfer that it would compromise the integrity of the experience. I was wrong.





As a conversion Quake exceeds all expectations. The game may not run quite as smooth as *Duke Nukem 3D*, the enemies may not be as detailed as the PC original, and some of the level layouts may have undergone minor surgery, but otherwise this is a remarkably authentic reproduction of the PC original right down to the ability to rocket jump and instigate monster vs monster fights. Lobotomy have succeeded against all odds in bringing the single player *Quake* experience to the Saturn intact, and despite what you may have heard elsewhere, that's good news for corridor fans.

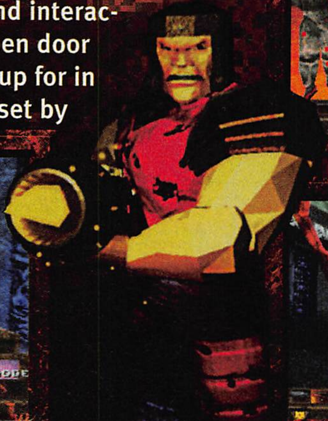


Lets just dispel a certain myth right now: *Quake* is NOT a bad single player game. It may not be quite as compelling as *Duke Nukem 3D* but what it lacks in depth and interactivity (there isn't even an open door button) it more than makes up for in action and atmosphere. Offset by









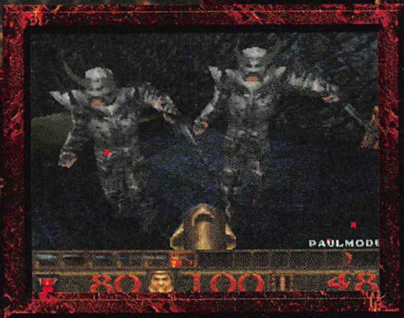


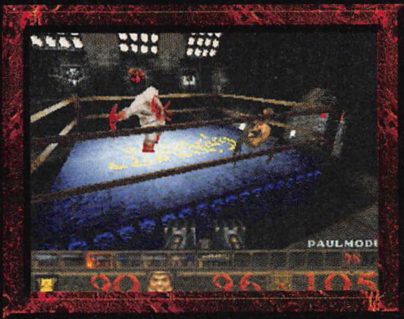


Trent Reznor's ambient soundtrack, *Quake*'s awesome medieval/industrial environments provide the perfect background for a non-stop festival of carnage that takes the basic gameplay of *Doom* and blasts it into the third dimension. *Quake* is visceral, kinetic, brutal, and above all, totally compelling.

Interestingly, the pace of the gameplay on console is slightly different to the PC version. Because you are using a joypad (as opposed to the superior mouse/keyboard PC setup) and because you cannot save during a level, you tend to be much more cautious. That single health pack you left back at the start of the stage suddenly becomes worth the trip...

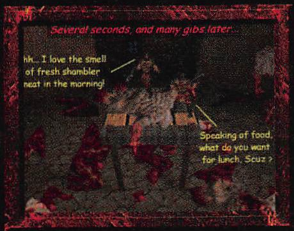
Quake Saturn is a technological marvel. Lobotomy have pulled out the stops to bring this baby home and the end result is nothing short of stunning. My only real complaint (and you're going to hear this everywhere you go) is that the game has no multi-player mode. I've been saying this since the beginning, but without deathmatch *Quake* loses 90% of it's appeal. It's still a great game, but as a single player quest I just don't think it's a better purchase than *Duke Nukem 3D*. Still, if you have the money for both I do recommend you check it out. Lobotomy have single handedly turned the Saturn from a 'corridor free zone' into a 'corridor-rich environment'. If I were Sega I'd be doing everything in my power right now to keep Lobotomy very, very happy. *K*





LOBOTOMY LEVELS!

Saturn Quake features four Lobotomy designed secret levels which replace *PC Quake*'s original secret levels. In true Lobotomy style these maps are pure genius, ranging from a trek through a Ewok style tree top village to a Coliseum stage with a giant wrestling ring where you must pick monsters to fight for you against random computer enemies. If they lose, you lose (see shot above!)





DANK AND SCUZ - THE QUAKE COMIC

Activated from a secret chamber within the game, the Dank and Scuz comic book is a 'slide show' with sound chronicling the day to day adventures of two bad-ass Quake soldiers stranded in the Netherworld. It's very amusing.

REVIEW

SEGA SATURN

- DEVELOPER - LOBOTOMY
- PUBLISHER - SEGA
- FORMAT - CD
- # OF PLAYERS - 1 (DOH!)
- DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
- AVAILABLE - GO GET IT!



KNIGHTMARE

Quake..on..Saturn..does..not..compute..bzzzt ..error..error.. •BOOM!•












It seems that the 3D action/adventure/platform genre has been growing like wildfire everywhere but on the poor old Saturn. Perhaps most developers are simply afraid (or lack the resources) to tackle the daunting task of creating an engine robust and clever enough to handle a free roaming 3D environment on Saturn. But long time European 3D pioneers Argonaut took on this challenge and produced *Croc* for both Saturn and PS (See Vol.5 Issue 10 for The Guvnor's take on the PS edition).

Like its PlayStation cousin (which incidentally started its development life after the Saturn version), the game opens with a great little real time intro showing baby Croc as he is discovered by the Gobbos and taken under their care. All is well until the gigantic and scary Baron Dante crashes the scene and spirits away a number of frightened little Gobbos. Now fully grown, Croc embarks on a magical journey to release his furry friends from their cages and restore peace to Gobbo Land. You know, it's your typical game reality.

Surely by now, people have come to expect the Saturn hardware to surprise on occasion, and it does so here in great form with *Croc*. It easily holds its own against the PS version, suffering just slightly in texture res and subtlety of shading. Argonaut's 3D Saturn engine is clean, fast, and smooth, rendering the little mini environments and characters with aplomb. No complaints in the graphics department.

As you begin playing and moving Croc around in the nicely designed world, you'll undoubtedly fall in love with the little guy. He's so cute! He's got his little backpack on and as he runs his little butt goes back and forth and it's just so darn cute I don't know what to do. Then a slight problem rears its head. *Croc* has what Knightmare likes to call "corridor control", meaning that when you press right on the control pad, Croc doesn't run to the right (a la *Mario 64*). Instead, he turns in place and pressing up makes him run forward. There's nothing really wrong with this control method, but it makes platform jumping a slightly nerve racking experience at times for it's often difficult to tell exactly which way Croc is going to run when you press up. You get used to it, but it forces you to play more carefully than what feels natural whenever the camera isn't directly behind your character.

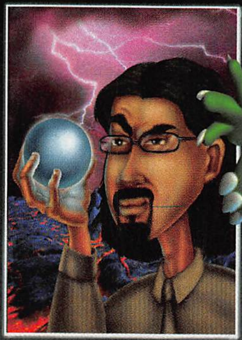
But beyond this slight hiccup (and the enemy's annoying habit of regenerating seconds after you kill them), *Croc* is all gravy. The levels are well designed, the graphics and boss encounters are excellent, and the insanely happy, high quality tunes will ring through your head for hours. *Croc* is a game that simply screams to be loved. You won't find anything else like it on Saturn. ***SD***



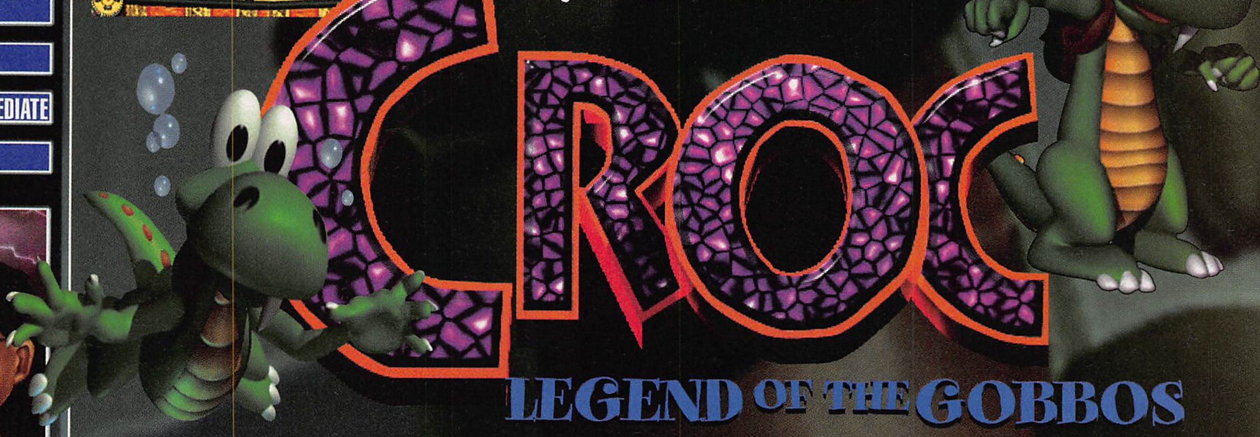

REVIEW

SEGA SATURN

- DEVELOPER - ARGONAUT SOFTWARE
- PUBLISHER - FOX
- FORMAT - CD
- # OF PLAYERS - 1
- DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
- AVAILABLE - NOW



SUBSTANCE D
Croc is a cute's cute!







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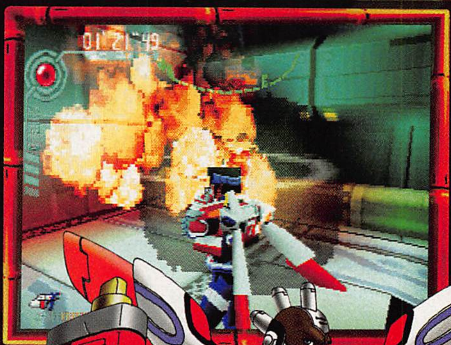
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I must admit, I was a little disappointed when I learned that Sonic Team's last Saturn project wouldn't be a *NiGHTS* or *Sonic* sequel. *Burning Rangers* sounded like a cool enough concept, but I was really hoping for the return of my two favorite Sonic Team characters. But hey, that was before I actually played *Burning Ranger*. Now that I've had a chance to get a feel for the game, I'm looking forward to it even more than I would a new *NiGHTS* or *Sonic*. Yuji Naka's done it again!



BURNING RANGERS



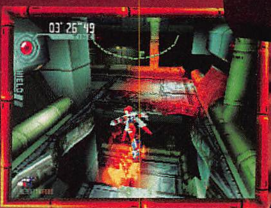
Set sometime in the not-too-distant future, *Burning Rangers* is a 3D action/adventure that combines elements from such diverse games as *Tomb Raider*, *Virtual On* and *Ignition Factor*. In *BR*, you play the part of either a male or female member of the Burning Rangers, an elite search-and-rescue team which specializes in fire fighting. But before you start thinking of yellow coats, fire trucks and hose pipes, remember: This is the future! These firemen (and women) are equipped with state-of-the-art technology that would make NASA green with envy. Think strength-enhancing exoskeletons (that allow for super human jumps), mobile teleporters (for transporting survivors to safety) and 'Vortex' guns that fire explosive rounds which suck the O_2 out of the impact zone, thus extinguishing any nearby fires.

I'm not sure of the exact storyline yet, but I do know that it involves battling your way through four different locations (each containing two HUGE levels and a boss stage) in an attempt to rescue survivors and extinguish fires. I believe there is a common thread linking all the locations, but don't quote me. This beta contained only the first location—The Energy Plant—but it was enough to get a feel for what Yuji Naka and his team are aiming at.

Control of the Rangers is a lot like the 'children' section of *NiGHTS*, with the d-pad or analog cup controlling the direction of your character and the L and R shoulder buttons rotating the camera. Both Rangers can double jump to extreme heights (and glide for short distances by holding down the jump button) and there are also some tertiary moves to master, like strafe jumps and mid air flips. Even at this early stage (30% complete) the control feels incredibly intuitive, and it makes playing the game an absolute joy.

The levels are broken down into a string of multi-story rooms and corridors, divided up by interlocking doors and elevators. As you might imagine, the fire has dramatically re-structured









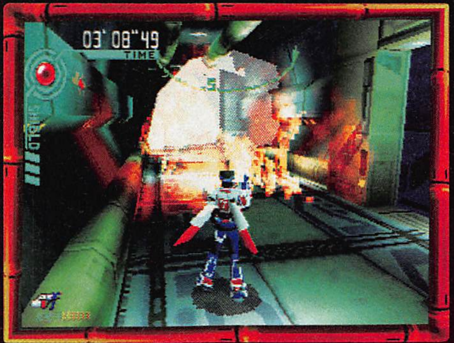
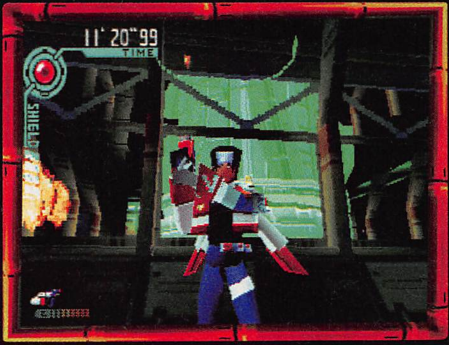


PREVIEW | SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - SEGA	# OF PLAYERS - 1
PUBLISHER - SEGA	DIFFICULTY - N/A
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - SPRING '98



KNIGHTMARE
Yuji Naka is Sega's Miyamoto!



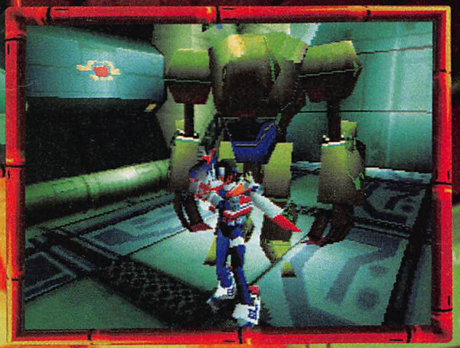
all the environments and they are 'unstable' to say the least—it's like stepping right into the finale of a disaster movie! Floors crumble beneath your feet, ceilings cave in and fire explodes from walls when you're least expecting it (see the Backdraft box-out).

Fortunately you are not defenseless against the flames. Both characters come equipped with their unit standard Vortex gun, an O_2-sucking laser rifle which can be charged to fire at different strengths. Sega's assured us that the final version will also feature a wide assortment of both regular weapons and power ups to aid you in your quest. Why would you need a regular weapon? Because fire isn't the only enemy you'll be facing. In the Energy Plant, security robots have malfunctioned and are out to stop all intruders—including you. And then there's the boss: an acid spitting bio-mechanical plant several stories tall.



Burning Rangers is looking hot! The graphics once again re-define what we've come to expect from Sega's black box (the lighting is particularly impressive) and although this version didn't feature any music, you can bet it will be up to Sonic Team's usual high standards. Just writing this is making me itch for another game, and that's always a good sign. We'll be back with more info the moment we get it. *K*



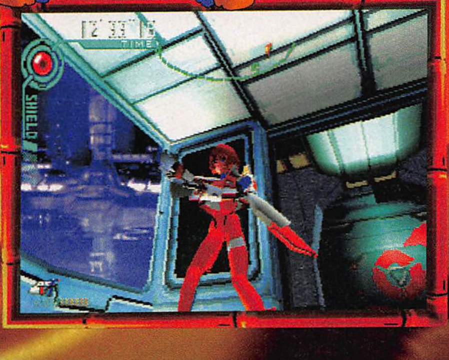
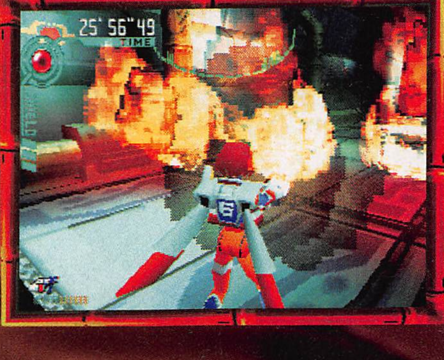




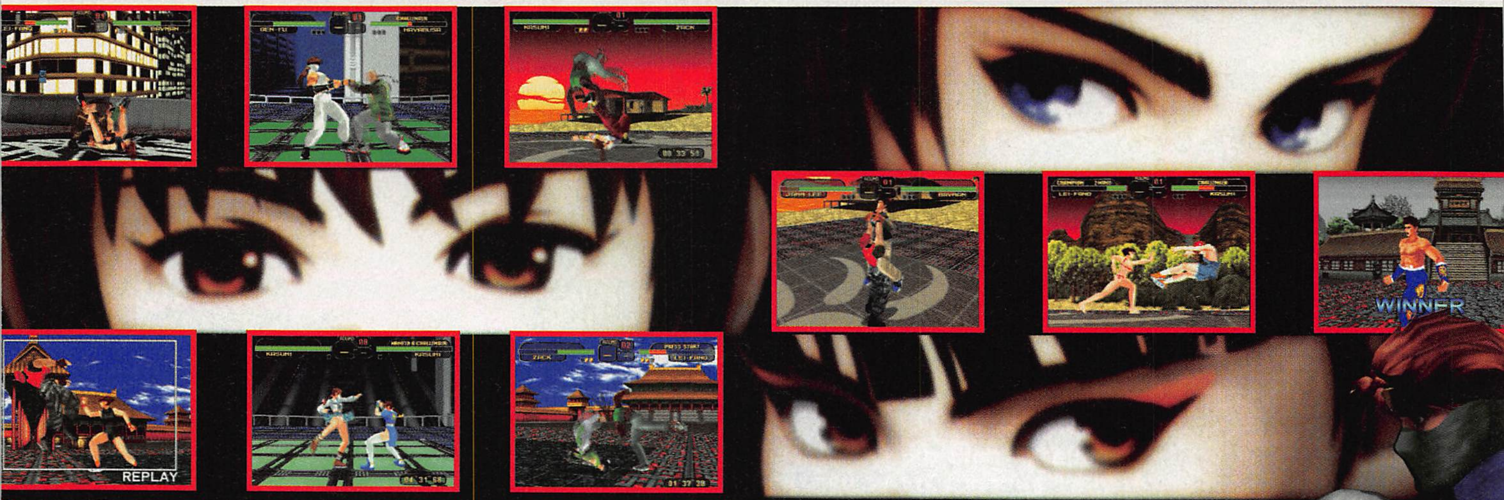


BACKDRAFT!!!

Just like in reality, there are different kinds of fires that you will encounter. Some are isolated and can be put out easily, some burn from pipes and cannot. Some even spit streams of fire back out at you when you attempt to extinguish them. But by far the deadliest is the backdraft. As you explore the level, keep your ears open. Occasionally, you will hear a whooshing sound, indicating that a back draft is about to explode nearby. This often happens as you go to collect items and requires emergency evasive maneuvers! Jump!


3D COMBATIVE SPORTS
DEAD OR ALIVE
DEAD OR ALIVE VISUAL SEGASATURN



DEAD OR ALIVE

デッドオアアライブ



Tecmo's *Dead or Alive* has received its fair share of notoriety. First, the game was unique in its original arcade guise as the one and only non-Sega game to use the vaunted Model 2 board, a move which put *DoA* squarely in the lime light. And as if that didn't bring enough attention to the project, Tecmo went and gave the female characters these massive, bouncing breasts, much to the delight of a fair number of players I would imagine. Sexist? Maybe. Of course, no such claims could be leveled if the male characters had their own little bounce, but I'll just leave that well alone.

Like it's arcade counterpart, Saturn *DoA* profits from Sega technologies. In this case, it's none other than the incredible *VF 2* engine. With that alone, *DoA* is as nice looking as anything else on the system. You simply cannot beat hi-res, 60 fps for sheer visual impact. Sure, the backgrounds are 2D, but they're drawn with enough skill as to sufficiently compensate for this slight graphical compromise. In short, a beautiful game. And I appreciate Tecmo's contribution of well designed textures and fantastic movement to truly bring the engine to its appreciable climax.





A bunch of cool little ideas are sprinkled throughout the somewhat *VFV* (*Virtua Fighter/Fighting Viper*) three button style play. By relegating block to the comfy "hold back" method, a counter button is added in place of the Guard in the GPK button configuration. Whenever you see the beginning of an opponent's attack, you can counter it and give a quick hit back. Some counters also lead into throws and even grapple combos with certain characters. Then you've got your explosive rings instead of ring outs and hey, you've got a fairly different feeling game.

And now for the moment some of you have been waiting for... the breasts. Mammary enthusiasts of the arcade version will be pleased to hear that the bouncing bundles of joy are fully intact here. It's a great little bit of physics actually. And if you want to enjoy the game itself without the potentially offensive (but harmless, I think) movements, you can turn the bounce off in the options screen. That's fair, isn't it?

DoA is set for a stateside release in January to coincide with the forthcoming PS version (yes, we'll finally get to see what Model 2 could like on Sony's little gray machine). This preview was based on a complete Japanese version, and I doubt there'll be any changes at all made to the game in its period of hibernation. Nonetheless, we'll return with a full-on GF review once it's set for release. But in case you can't tell, I like it! Don't change a thing Tecmo. **SD**



which is your fate? dead or alive?

more costume changes than a jacko concert!



Respect on the side to Tecmo for endowing the characters with a great number of costumes. Some have up to nine different outfits!

explosive rings!



Knock the opponent down onto this the energy grid and watch as their body is blasted upward, prone to a bundubar juggle session!

P PREVIEW

SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - TECMO

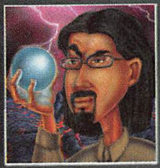
PUBLISHER - TECMO

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN

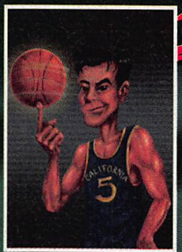


SUBSTANCE D
In case you were wondering, the bounce is in.

GAMEFAN Sports

JOE KIDD · THE ROOKIE · JACQUES STRAP · ECM

VIEWPOINTS



JOE KIDD

KIDD'S Corner

Alright, alright, I admit it... Somebody opened a can of whoopass when I wasn't looking, and sprayed it all over my NFL predictions. Somebody told me Emmitt only had 2 touchdowns 3/4s of the way through the NFL season... get outta here... Barry Switzer just said they were ready to make a run at the Championships, yes... even at 5-5... uh, Barry? Can you leave the door open for Mr. Seifert on your way out? Ok, so my prediction of the Boyz in Big D takin' the Super Bowl this year hasn't exactly been accurate. So I wasn't exactly on the money, when I said Cal's once beloved coach Mariucci came out way too early. Ok, so the Raiders weren't exactly the surprise team of the AFC... now you know why I couldn't wait til hoops season! I'll tell you one thing though, when I play GameDay, Madden, QBC and all the rest next year, Napolean Kaufman will be my man! Representin' the Pac-10 with authority! Oh how the mighty have fallen... the Pack got a little satiated, Brett made one too many commercial, and Reggie conducted too few sermons to save the posse in Wisconsin. Now mere mortals, the like of Indianapolis march over the green and yellow. The only question that seems to remain, is who can stop the Niners, and if it's Denver stepping to the plate, how many yards will 1 (Garrison Hearst) and 1A (Terry Kirby) run up on the Bronc's? Was I wrong about Kordell though? Slash came out to a slow start, but started tearin' and wearin' guys down, on the ground, in the air, down the sidelines, up the middle... the man is All-Everything.

Tis the time for basketball though, Barkley's huckin' punks through windows... Rodman argues about his contract all season, then 3 games into it he says he's lost his enthusiasm... Garnett is proving to be worth the big dollars, makin' everybody his beotch... Lakers are lookin' dope... people are getting shot over whether or not Iverson's the best point man in the NBA... Tarpley makes a cameo by burning a lady with an iron (after partying with Bam Morris no doubt)... Tim Duncan is doing his best Mt. Mutombo impression, by sending shots back by the handful... MJ's gettin' worked by the likes of the Celtics... Penny? Injured again... Webber? Injured again... Barkley? Injured again... Fantasy basketball GM's are heard slapping their foreheads collectively across the nation... and the Warriors are sure to send Sprewell and Joe Smith packing in an effort to be the most ridiculed franchise in NBA history.

That's life in sports as I see it. Bundle up for Nagano.

Joe Kidd can be reached for questions or comments at: rlee@metropolismedia.com

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Sega has found something in *NBA Action*, with the most solid gameplay of any basketball game to ever hit the Saturn. Players are a little chunky, (compared to PSX counterpart *NBA Fastbreak)* but it adds to the physicality of the game. Great transition game, as well as nice low post action.

G	C	P	M	O	
7	8	8	5	9	86



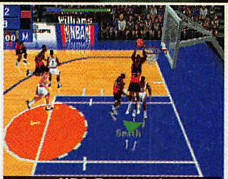
NBA Action
Sega
Sega Saturn

Finally a good hoop title, for the Saturn! Developers, Visual Concepts, have delivered Sega one of the most enjoyable basketball games. of the season. Solid graphics and sound compliment the tight control and deep stat tracking. A fresh start for Sega Sports.

G	C	P	M	O	
7	8	8	7	9	86

A ground breaking hoops sim, in an ever growing world of arcade-style NBA titles... the irony of it all? Midway, the proud owners of *NBA Hangtime*, are the guys behind it. Who woulda thunk it? While it lacks the TNT presentation of a lot of today's games, the gameplay will impress.

G	C	P	M	O	
8	8	8	5	9	88



NBA Fastbreak
Midway
Sony PlayStation

This is a great game. What was *NBA Action*, on the Saturn, turns into *NBA Fastbreak*, on the PlayStation. Visual Concepts has firmly established itself as a real contender, in the basketball genre. More depth and realism than most of the competition.

G	C	P	M	O	
8	8	8	7	9	87

When you're NWO, you're NWO for life, and that's exactly what you will be saying with THQ's wrestler. The overall package is excellent, offering plenty of characters that mimic their real life counter parts to the tee. If you love pro wrestling you just gotta' respect *WCW vs NWO*. It's currently the best game in the category, and great fun against your buds.

G	C	P	M	O	
9	9	9	5	5	85



WCW vs. NWO
ThQ
Nintendo 64

While I prefer the hard-core precision of *Japan Pro Featuring Virtua*, it's currently *very* stuck in Japan. *WCW v.s. NWO* is the best you can hope for on these shores. All your pro faves are here, and all their cool idiosyncratic specialties are animated with respectable detail. The music BLOWS, the graphics are above average, and the control is a little slippy. Great choice for fans though; all the best wrestlers are right here. Next? 3D WWF!!!

G	C	P	M	O	
7	7	7	3	7	73

Coming from a guy who thinks *NFL GameDay '98* is the best sports game of the year, you gotta expect, *GameBreaker* to be pretty close behind. You get the same solid graphics and that signature sense of impact, combined with an AI based on each of the individual 112 Division I schools. The Niners can have Mariucci, because I'm in charge of the Bears now!

G	C	P	M	O	
8	8	8	8	8	87



NCAA GameBreaker
Sony
Sony PlayStation

It's college *GameDay*; plain and simple. The same engine, with comparable sound and graphics make this a good football sim, but not a good buy, if you already own GameDay. The addition of fight songs and the college playbook do add some extra flavor.

G	C	P	M	O	
9	8	8	6	5	84

Ha ha...I knew this engine was too powerful to admit defeat in only a year. Once again *WWS* blows away every other soccer sim. with the best motion, finest options, and killer animation that SOJ can offer. Let it be known that not much has changed this year 'cept for some unexpected tweaking...so what? Just enjoy!

G	C	P	M	O	
9	9	9	7	8	96



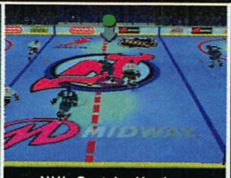
World Wide Soccer
Sega
Sega Saturn

The first update of the greatest soccer game ever, Sega fine tunes the control and ever so slightly upgrades the graphics. The big question being: Do you really need this in light of admittedly minor upgrades? OF COURSE YOU DO! All soccer junkies NEED this—go get it!

G	C	P	M	O	
9	9	9	7	7	94

The Rookie knows where it's at. Gretzky '98 tries a little too hard to implement sim-a-licious features into its pre-existing arcade engine. The result? A half-assed hockey sim. Now, take it as an arcade button masher and you're in heaven! Great playability, hot graphics, real players, and astounding multi-player modes make it so.

G	C	P	M	O	
8	7	7	4	7	82



NHL Gretzky Hockey
Midway
Nintendo 64

This is a tough read. While the playability and graphics are superb, it is not a game for sim-heads, but is too far removed from the original to be a fave amongst the *NBA Jam* crowd. But then again, when you're a N64 owner, beggars can't be choosers.

G	C	P	M	O	
9	7	7	6	8	83

Video tennis? I can't remember the last time that happened. But *Tennis Arena* proves that the classics are still fun to play. While the action is intense, the setting is not... it's not often you play this country club sport against a bare chested Samoan, amongst the pyramids of Egypt. All in all though, a fun multi-player game, that's good for a laugh.

G	C	P	M	O	
7	7	8	5	8	71



Tennis Arena
Ubi Soft
Sony PlayStation

Tennis Arena relies on gameplay rather than licensing or heavy simulation. Ten characters, secret players and power strokes make this a ton of fun to play. Not as tedious as tennis titles, in the past, *Tennis Arena* makes a great 1 or 2 player experience. Check it out.

G	C	P	M	O	
6	8	8	5	7	80



The fact is, nobody but nobody ('cept freaks like me) buys TWO soccer games, on the same system, the same year. And if you buy *FIFA 64* you're just not getting the best N64 footy game. The control suffers due to the fluctuating frame rates, and there's definite lag between your thumb and the screen. Somethin' this ambitious needs better hardware, period. Go for *Superstar*.

G	C	P	M	O	
8	6	7	7	8	70



FIFA 64
EA Sports
Nintendo 64



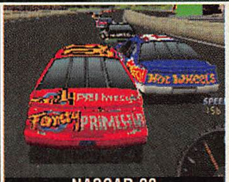
Slowly, but surely, the *FIFA* franchise is returning to its old form (oh how I miss 3DO *FIFA*!). Responsive control and some good sound make this a solid soccer title. Is it as good as *International Superstar Soccer*, though? Hell no, so don't fork out the coin unless your a *FIFA* follower.

G	C	P	M	O	
8	7	7	7	7	73



Sure, Saturn *Nascar'98* plays really well...and the analog support is very nice. The modes are fantastic, and the mass of real-life drivers rocks. Sadly the engine just isn't up to par with the Saturn's hot arcade racers, but this is due to the nature of real-life tracks: you can't just make up a new corner to hide pop-up, ya' know? Ultimately *Nascar'98* is unoffensive. Note: *CCE* still destroys it.

G	C	P	M	O	
7	7	7	6	6	73



NASCAR 98
EA Sports
Sega Saturn



What we have here is an inferior version of an OK game to begin with—not the ideal starting point, I suppose. Glitchy textures, draw-in problems and frame rate issues, although it does play alright. Just not my cup o' tea, really, but someone must have liked it to warrant an update.

G	C	P	M	O	
7	8	7	6	5	75

On the horizon with Actua Sports...

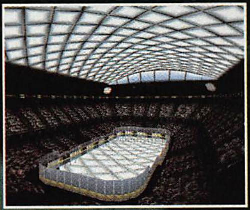


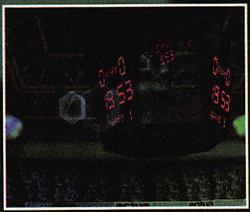


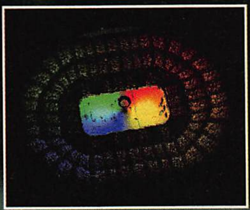














ACTUA TENNIS

Actua is jumping on the tennis bandwagon, as they introduce their version of serve and volley action. All of the players have been motion captured, and they rally on true 3D courts. Actua Tennis represents your first chance to experience Actua Sports 3D engine, giving them the cutting edge is sports game technology. Look for it in Easter of '98 on the PlayStation.

ACTUA SOCCER 2

The Actua Soccer series will attempt to make a strong return to the fields with Part Deux. This year Gremlin used real motion-captured "footballers", which are captured in authentic soccer stadiums. Gremlin went straight to the expert in getting the active involvement of English captain, Alan Shearer. Shearer not only contributed to the AI, making it undoubtedly genuine, but also chose his favorite, All-Time team, which features Pele himself! 64 International teams are available, with 24 teams open for you to customize. Available now in Europe.

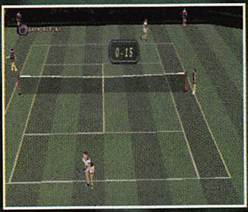
ACTUA GOLF 2

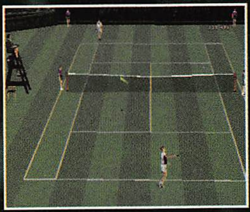
Fans of number Actua Golf have so much more to look forward to this year, as Gremlin worked hard to take their acclaimed game to the "next level". You'll discover a new player model, with new animations and mo-cap refinement. All of the graphics have been updated, including water reflections, improved textures and lots of new scenery. All of the controls have been changed as well, so you're not stuck with the same game as last year... not that there was anything wrong was last year... The fairways of 6 new courses will be open to you, to hit the links til your heart content. 3 real-world courses have been accurately reproduced, as well as 3 fantasy courses made from a culmination of some of the most challenging holes around. Available now in Europe.

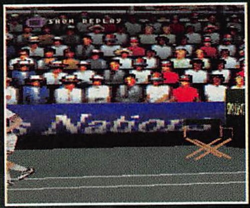
ACTUA ICE HOCKEY

With Nagano Winter Olympics right around the corner it's time to strap on the skates and hit the rink. This year, Actua Ice Hockey will be the official hockey game of the Nagano Winter Olympics. As with the rest of the solid line of Actua Sports, Gremlin put an emphasis on on gameplay and realism. To get that edge on ice, they brought out the pros and spent tireless hours on perfecting this 100% motion captured ice title. Their use of the latest 10 camera motion analysis system enabled them with a more expansive capture area, and the ability to replicate more body mass and velocity. Available February, 1998.









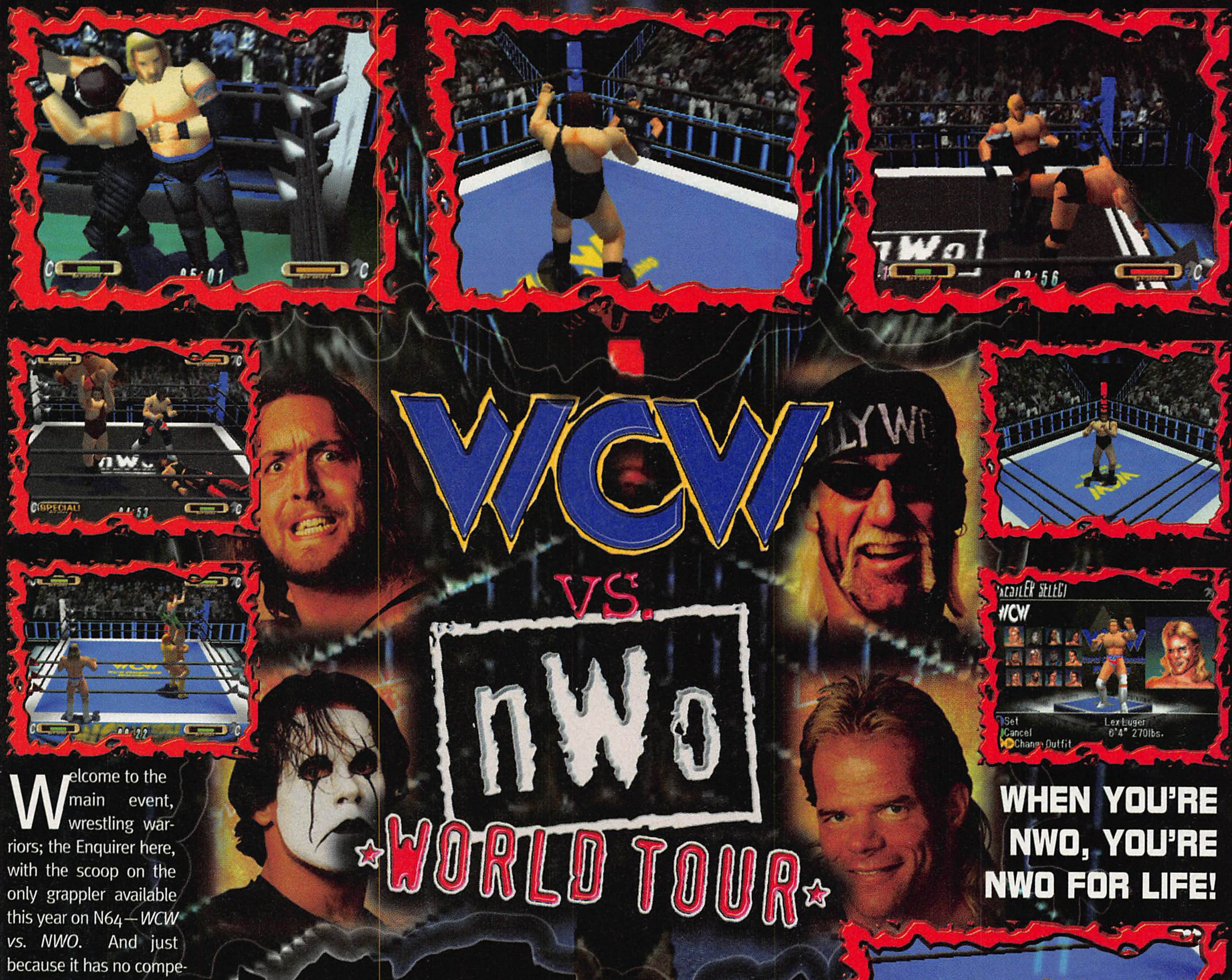












WHEN YOU'RE NWO, YOU'RE NWO FOR LIFE!

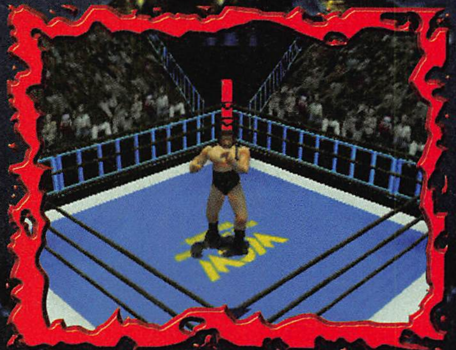
Welcome to the main event, wrestling warriors; the Enquirer here, with the scoop on the only grappler available this year on N64—*WCW vs. NWO*. And just because it has no competition in the ring doesn't mean it isn't gonna grab ya' by the short and curlies. Hang onto your seats, freaks, we're goin' ringside...

The gameplay, for the most part, is a breeze to get used to and moves are basically the same for all of the characters (no moaning, please). It's child's play to bust out all the signature moves, like DDP's Diamond Cutter and Hogan's leg drop. The only thing that was a little ridiculous (and most wrestling fans plus 2•Skoopz™ will agree) is that Eric Bishoff, as a playable character, is a crime against wrestlers and Marks alike. Eric Bishoff has no skill (read, **ZERO**) and should have been replaced with Curt Henning or even Virgil from the NWO (ANYTHING but Bishoff...oy). Anyway, the four player mode is a blast and one thing that's really great is that you can pick different outfits for each brawler. Hogan has three outfits: old school yellow and red; NWO hulk; and NWO hulk with glasses (kinda' like 'Barbie' for wrestling fans, heh).



Some complaints (besides that Bishoff nonsense) are that you can't play in the tournament mode, finish your match, and push a button to pass the next four matches till you go again. Instead, you have to sit and watch three to four 30 minute matches which gets aggravating very quickly—what the hell is the point of that?! I guess I have more time for reading now...(yeah, right). As for the music, well, T•HQ should have told the developers, Asmik, to well...let's just say I was praying for someone to show up with a chalk board and some nice, sharp nails.

That about does it from down at ringside. *WCW vs. NWO* is an excellent wrestling game that has some minor problems here and there, but the overall product is simply the best wrestling game out there for the N64 (not that it was exactly a heated competition). Oh, and remember, life's just too sweet. Quoth the Raven... *E*







DEVELOPER - ASMIK	# OF PLAYERS - 1-4
PUBLISHER - THQ	DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
FORMAT - 96 MB CART	AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER



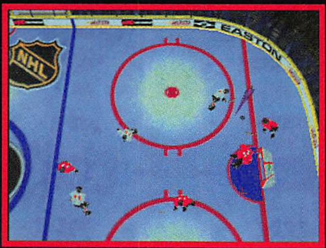
ENQUIRER Nobody beats Mr. Perfect! NOBODY!!

Cool, the new *Gretzky*! This year we'll be enjoying, well, updated stats and...and new licenses! O.K., not terribly exciting, but if you liked last year's you'll enjoy the same balls-out *Open Ice* type of intensity. And if you're new to *Gretzky*, the '98 version should be a fine place to start!

The NHL and NHLPA are tagging along this year bringing the full support of over 600 players and two dozen teams to the rink. Stats are updated, based-on last season, and rosters consist of the current, 1997 team stock. The Season options are in, create player is there for you to tinker with, and stat-tracking (by initials) is in effect. Heck, with all these options, and the new license support, *Gretzky '98* seems to be taking itself a little too seriously! Honestly, the engine is still too arcade-based for them to be attempting any serious stab into the realm of, let's say, the *NHL* or *Faceoff* games, but it's good to see the weak inclusion regardless.

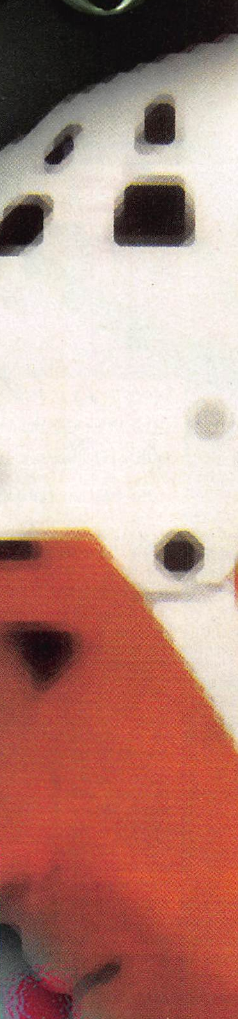
I'll let that one go, quietly, because while Gretzky '98 may be only decent as a serious 5 on 5 game, it still excels, explosively, as a 3 on 3 arcade button masher. Shrink the rink size down from pro to arcade, slap in the pads, and grab your buddies! Ah...the ensuing festival of thrills, spills, grunts, and elbow smashing should explain everything! Speed-bursting flip-checks, rocket pucks, bricked-up goalies...oh yeah, it's mindless, manic, and all good. Spot-on control, too. *Gretzky* is the sole contender in the hockey genre to offer a solid, immediately accessible arcade-type game, and for all intents and purposes it rips!




SERIOUS ARCADE HOCKEY ACTION!

WAYNE GRETZKY'S '98 3D HOCKEY

Is it just me or is the engine a little faster this year? Yep, it's faster, but unfortunately the frames per second increase brings with it a few "herky-jerky stops and starts". For example, a mid-rink camera sweep often shifts into lovely 60 fps and then oops! A player or two enter the screen and it farts and sputters into the 20 to 30 range. Oh well. Everything else is cool, including fine player animation, cool transparencies, and those classic mip-mapped "only a mother could love 'em" mugs 'o doom. The music is really, really bad, but great sound effects and good voice-over should keep your ears busy when it counts. Streak a wicked one-timer through the five hole and the beer-swillin' puckheads shall sing your praise!!!

"...full support of over 600 players and two dozen teams..."

I'll put it to you this way: Owning *Gretzky '98* is fine by me. I like this style of arcade gameplay, this game does it and does it well, and you can't find this type of action anywhere else. I guess it all depends on if you're looking for it! -*JS*








GAMEFAN SPORTS — PREVIEW

DEVELOPER - ATARI	# OF PLAYERS - 1-4
PUBLISHER - MIDWAY	DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - NOW

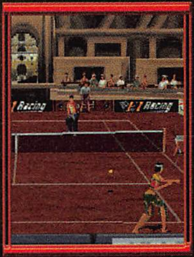


JACQUES STRAP
Midway fills the N64 hockey void!









tennis arena

your racket is your only weapon

After a flurry of tennis titles on the Genesis (all of which basically sucked), developers have grown bashful and decided to cut down the flow of tennis sims to the 32-bit systems. Despite the minimal AI needed, and straightforward gameplay, tennis remains one of the most difficult sims to develop properly. Most of the time (Ocean's game is a prime example) the quest for a realistic tennis match results in a game so tedious and difficult, that you end up heaving the controller in frustration. It would seem, with the exception of *V-Tennis*, there is nowhere to turn for a good tennis sim...

Not so fast. UBI Soft will be delivering a new tennis title just in time for Christmas. Discarding unnecessary licenses and boring real-life personalities (if one more person tells me how great Venus Williams is, I'm gonna puke), UBI Soft has concentrated on refining the playability. This comes as a major relief.

Looking much more like *V-Tennis*, than anything else, *Tennis Arena* is a great deal of fun to play. For starters, learning to volley is relatively easy, which is saying a lot, considering most tennis titles never even allow you that much enjoyment. Responsive controls, easy to master strokes and a generous racket surface



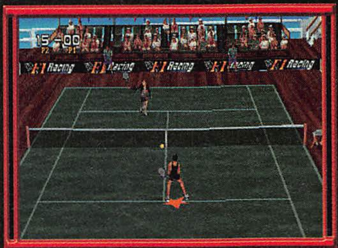




make the matches exciting and spare you the high-blood pressure attributed to other tennis games.

As far as options go, all you are presented with are the basics. You've got singles, doubles and tournament play, while there are ten pros to choose from, initially. Obviously there are the different court surfaces, too, which each have unique effects on ball movement.

Graphically, *Tennis Arena* is adequate, utilizing polygonal characters and 3-D courts. The backgrounds won't wow the veteran gamer, but

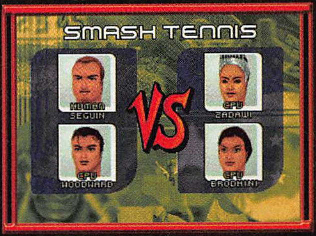


during play, you are hardly allowed the luxury of a wandering eye. Sound, too, is not very noteworthy, but this *is* tennis. Be thankful FOX hasn't gotten a chance to add in a rock soundtrack and raucous crowd chants. Some more "ooohs" and "aaahs" would be nice, though.

Tennis Arena is neither groundbreaking nor original. What it is, is pure gameplay and that is all you can ask for. Competitive tennis awaits all in both 1-player and multi-player modes, without the usual tedium which accompanies most tennis title. *JK*

GAME...SET...MATCH!



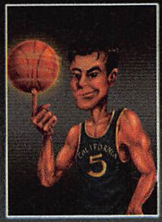


GAMEFAN SPORTS

REVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - SMART DOG
PUBLISHER - UBI SOFT
FORMAT - CD
OF PLAYERS - 1-4
DIFFICULTY - MODERATE
AVAILABLE - NOW



JOE KIDD
I love playin' with little green balls!

Baffling is about the only word I can come up with which describes the lack of Olympic titles, on the market. Considering that the bulk of sports sims, for the 32-bit, focus on the big five (golf, hoops, football, hockey and baseball) and offer little, if any, originality, you would think developers would be all over the Olympiad. You know, it is the biggest, most glorious sports contest in the world...

Thank the Lord that at least one company, out there, is capitalizing. Konami, the folks that wowed the eighties audience with the button-pounding, *Track & Field*, are continuing their support.

Last year, Konami released a sequel, of sorts, in the guise of *International Track & Field*. A phenomenal title (not to mention a relieving break from the monotony of stat-based simulation) that had the gamer relying on speed and timing, as well a strategy, *IT&F* was a monument to the by-gone, Olympic classics, such as *Summer Games*, *Winter Games* and *Decathlon*.





Konami has clearly proven its ability to develop sports titles for the N64 (anyone who doesn't think that *International Superstar Soccer* isn't the best soccer game for the system is completely high), as well as for the PlayStation, so speculating on the outcome of the product is, more or less, trivial. With the N64 version about 80% complete, I can tell you that most of the events control beautifully, and the graphics and speed of play, are nominal. Surprising, too, is the sound. Both effects and music are exemplary, sounding less like a canned, cartridge game, and more like a CD. The PlayStation version, while less complete, likewise shows promise.





PSX Version

Like *IT&F*, the key to success lies in the speed at which you hit the buttons (for some events), as well as your timing and strategy. *Nagano Winter Olympics '98* does have the same problem, as its sister opus, in that it is easy to master the game, when you are matched up against the computer. But these games truly shine in their multiplayer mode...

Nagano 64 will feature 12 events; three more than its PlayStation counterpart. The events range from such Winter Olympiad classics as speed skating and bobsled, to eye-popping crowd favorites, such as freestyle aerial and snowboard half-pipe (exclusive to N64). Other events include luge, curling (my personal favorite), ski jump (you can get that whole "agony of defeat" thing going if you screw this one up), and alpine downhill, alpine slalom and snowboard slalom.

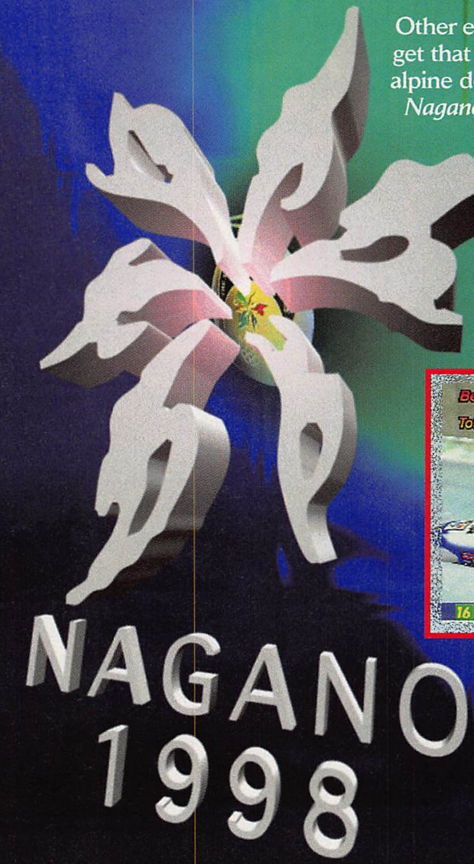
Nagano Winter Olympics '98 will be hitting the stores before the middle of January - just enough time to get you ready for the real thing, in February. The full scoop on how good these titles are, will show up in our next issue. ***TR***

PREVIEW

- DEVELOPER - KONAMI
- PUBLISHER - KONAMI
- FORMAT - CD
- # OF PLAYERS - 1-4
- DIFFICULTY - MODERATE
- AVAILABLE - JANUARY

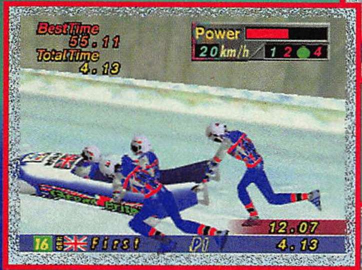


THE ROOKIE
Just in time for the Winter festivities!



NAGANO WINTER OLYMPICS '98





TWELVE DIFFERENT WINTER EVENTS!
(N64 VERSION ONLY)





NBA IN THE ZONE '98



Fans of the hardcourt have got to be excited. The high top action we all love has finally been unveiled on the N64, thanks to the minds of Konami. Konami already demonstrated their mastery of the console with their mammoth hit, International Superstar Soccer. Now we can all look forward to the exciting saga of the In The Zone series in '98.





The challenge that IT Zone faces, is not so much beating Live, ShootOut, NBA Action and Fastbreak, because they own the N64, but rather it must defeat the challenge that arises from the N64 controller itself. For instance, the default button for switching players is the furthest yellow button on the right... not too cool. Of course you can adjust the controller configuration to match your style of play, but the bottom line is that there are just a whole lot of buttons. As much as it frustrates me, being such a PSX enthusiast, I really believe the number of buttons and on-the-fly options can enhance the game. It may very well have taken my most favorite sport to force me to see the positives in this behemoth of a controller, but the end result is what's important.



At first glance, the speed of the game really seems slow. The court spacing, the relative size of the players and the overall depth is very true to life. The speed of the players however maintains the necessity to constantly be holding down the Turbo button; I know the NBA game has slowed down over the years, but come on... You'll notice that you can't just run through players, as you normally can in other games, but instead, come to a complete stop until you either change directions or go around the player in question. Other aspects of the game are also taken quite literally, like passing. In most games, if you just pass up the court, you'll most likely hit somebody on your team, nine times out of ten. But if you throw a random pass in IT Zone '98, you'll find it quickly becoming an errant pass.





Visually, I've heard complaints of "that N64 fuzziness", a haze which seems to rest upon the screen. Personally however, I wasn't bothered at all by it, it's just a different look. In fact I thought the animations and motion capture are in some ways the most realistic I've ever seen; ones which if viewed peripherally, could actually be mistaken for the real thing. I am very impressed with the overall look of the game, and love the player stat overlays shown throughout the game; very thorough, very clear.

It's quite obvious the long wait is over for N64 owners and sports, as we can all sit back and watch them start to rollllllll on in. ***JK***

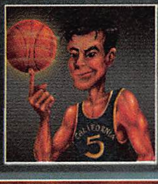




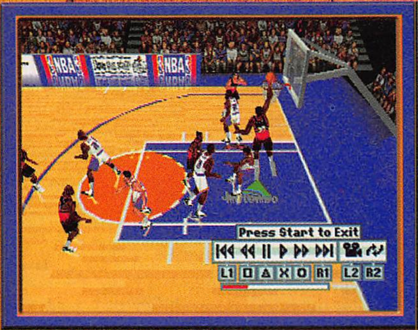
"The animations and motion capture are in some ways the most realistic ever seen...could actually be mistaken for the real thing."

GAMEFAN SPORTS — PREVIEW

DEVELOPER - KONAMI
PUBLISHER - KONAMI
FORMAT - CD
OF PLAYERS - 1-4
DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE
AVAILABLE - FEB 98



JOE KIDD
Hoops on the N64!? Hooray!!







The first time I played Midway's *NBA Fastbreak*, I thought to myself, "Pretty cool, but kinda gimpy at the same time..." It just seemed to me, the self-proclaimed master of hoops, couldn't get a grip on this game -- I couldn't get a steal whenever I wanted, I couldn't grab every rebound, couldn't even swat the ball into the bleachers -- in fact what I was faced with was the most real life hoop simulation, so real, I didn't know what hit me. So after further investigation, I thought back to myself, "Man! This is a damn good game!"

What's the big idea? I mean the nerve of Midway puttin' out a game where you have to actually be facing the ball handler to get a steal, or go face to face with the shooter to get a block... You mean it's not just about timing, but positioning too? I never really liked games that made me work, I thought the game was being lazy. But this is a sports title right, and what better way to translate the vigors of the actual sport, than to make the user work? Ingenious! *NBA Fastbreak* is the No Free Lunch game, we've all been needing. It's been a long time since a basketball game has broken the mold, one that didn't cheat and give you every chance to run up the score; one that made scoring effortless. Scoring isn't effortless in the NBA, nor should it be on your game system, and the minds at Visual Concepts have been perceptive enough to include this.

"This is a damn good game!"

What you won't get is the usual fanfare that you get from the "other guys". You don't get the NBA hip hop tunes, the fancy interfaces and halftime shows, but what you do get is some hardcore hoops. I admit, I love the fanfare, that's part of the NBA appeal, but when you clear it all off, what matters most, right? You'll love being able to draw charges, sweet behind the back moves, real time running and dribbling animations, and seeing guys pull up lame with injuries, hopping off the court. Your abilities (and inabilities) as a player are extremely close to the real thing. If you're too far under the basket, your shot will clank on the rim, and if your shot isn't released at the perfect height, your completion percentage declines.

One thing that's questionable however, are the players' hangtime. The players don't "hang" as long as I see fit, I mean I might jump three times for a regular rebound, before I lay my hands on it. Sure that has something to do with my timing, but it's hard to find a rhythm when the players land so quickly. Thus, blocks are equally difficult. The bottom line is that there isn't much play above the rim. The Garnett's, Webber's and Kobe's of the world get the big money for the big play... ATR baby! Without that aspect, you lose the most exciting aspect of today's NBA game. Now, I've already stated there's a learning curve involved in this game, but I think this goes slightly beyond that to where it needs to be adjusted for next year. One of the things partially responsible for this "problem", are the players' attributes I'm thinkin'. You'll find stiffs like Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf light you up for 35, or shot blockers like Mutombo walk away with goose eggs for rejections. Players need to play a little bit more to their strengths, which would add to the overall believability.

This is a very solid basketball title, aside from the fact that this is Midway's first shot at a real sim. If you're a hoopaholic, you won't want to let this one slip by. ***JK***











i love this stuff!

NBA FASTBREAK '98™

GAMEFAN SPORTS

P PREVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - VISUAL CONCEPTS

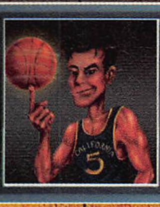
PUBLISHER - MIDWAY

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-8

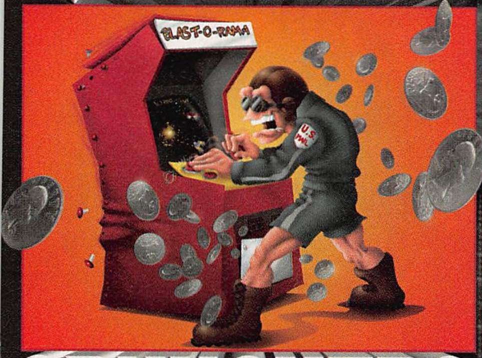
DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - NOW



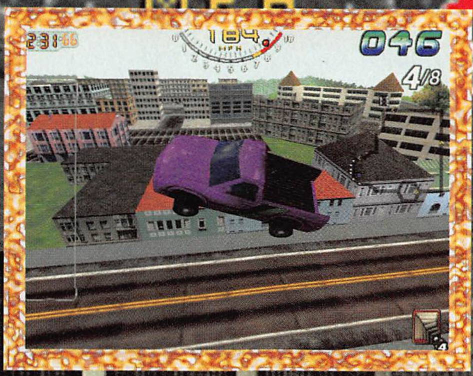
JOE KIDD
This sim breaks fast!

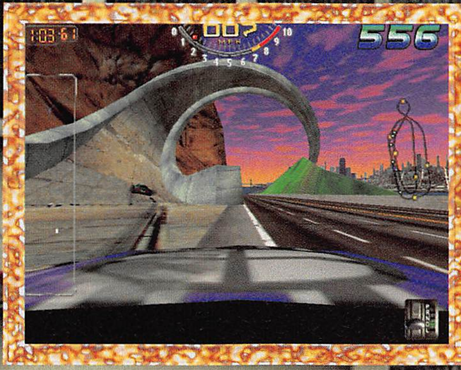
QUARTER

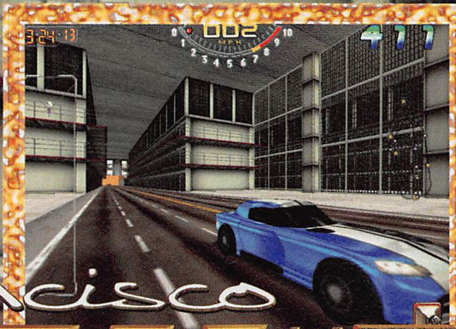


CRUNCHERS













San Francisco RUSH THE ROCK

After becoming the biggest arcade racing game in Atari Games' 25-year history, they're back with the sequel: *SF Rush: The Rock*. Featuring a number of new tracks, cars and shortcuts, this one is set to burn up arcades all over again.

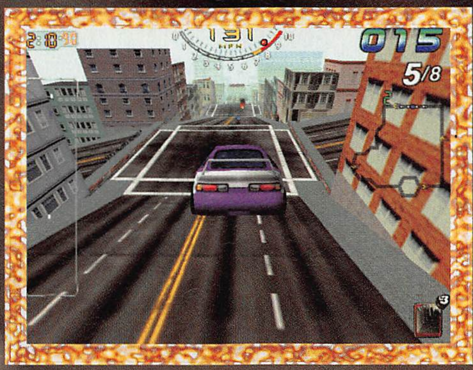
It has all the ingredients that made the first such a hit as well as all new additions that'll have vets flocking to it as well as first-timers. *Rush: The Rock* features four new tracks, four new cars, and a clutch of new shortcuts and all new tunes. They've also made the wise decision to add a mirror-mode that technically gives the game fourteen tracks in all (3 original, 4 new, 7 mirrored). Enough racing madness for even the most jaded of arcade dwellers.

The four new cars include a taxicab and pickup among others. Each of the new tracks is pegged at an advanced or higher difficulty level, catering strongly to pros of the previous rev. The best of all the tracks being the Rock itself. All you have to think of is a cross between *Hard Drivin'* and *Race Drivin's* stunt tracks and you'll get the idea. Featuring a corkscrew, loop, multiple jumps (*Dukes of Hazzard* style!), and a bunch of shortcuts makes this the best of the new tracks.

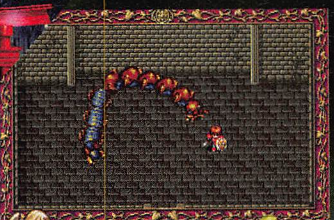
So what are ya waitin' for? Get ye to your nearest arcade and pump a few quarters into this Voodoo-powered beast (or debit cards if you go to one of those newfangled arcades). This one is worth at least a go, and probably more than that, once you get going and cruising through the stunt track—just don't eat before ya attempt it...passersby may get more than they bargained for! -ECM









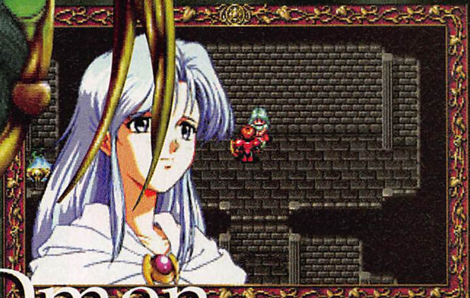





What once was so captivating now stands only as a reminder that technology, no matter how good it seems at the time, will always move forward. While that familiar Y's music still sends shivers down my spine (although the remix leaves much to be desired) and seeing it spiffully recolored sent me on a trek to see it all one more time, it certainly has no where near the impact it once had. Sadly only Ys one is on the disc and so there's really no more than two dungeons. Still, just the feeling of the 16-bit era in its infancy sends me reeling. That was probably the greatest time of my gaming life... so far. Xanadu and DragonSlayer (both pre Ys) are also featured on the two disc set which also includes a bonus CD packed with nifty excerpts. Classic refreshment. *ES*



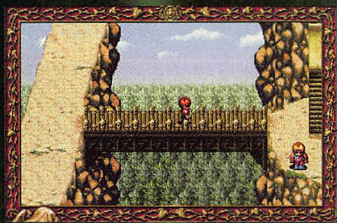
Return to a simpler time... When a man named Yuzo entranced us all and became a legend



Falcom Classics Volume 1
Ancient Ys Vanished Omen

















You're part of a group of elite Hackers who've just hacked they're way in to a test version of Argon Softwares new virtual world program, Paradigm-X. You soon find out however, that all is not as it seems. Paradigm-X is actually a portal through which demons are being summoned to feast on the souls of users. Lucky for you a friendly digital coyote shows up and takes you aside, giving you the means to infiltrate as a Devil Summoner yourself. Using your disguise to gain information you set out on a virtual journey beyond the imagination as you wield the power of a Devil Summoner in an effort to thwart demon-kind!

Brush up on your Japanese, Soul Hackers will likely never see the light of day in the U.S. *ES*



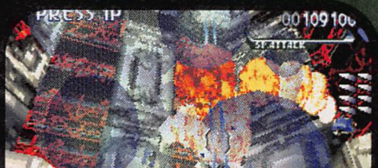










SEE THE GALAXY!
ALBION
OLD GAUL CITY
PALMYRA VALLEY
3RD FLEET
CARTHAGE BASE
ETRURIA
JUDA CENTRAL SYSTEM

LAYER SECTION II

PUT ON YOUR SPACE FACE SATURN FANS... WE GOT RAYSTORM!!

R REVIEW

SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - TAITO
PUBLISHER - MEDIAQUEST
FORMAT - CD
OF PLAYERS - 1
DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE
AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN



E. STORM
A Saturn import worth owning!!



Not so long ago, in a galaxy not so far away, Taito's *Raystorm* had a major impact as one of best second generation PlayStation shooters. A marriage of fluid polygonal battles, sweeping cameras and Zuntata-riffic tunes Taito's latest is a thrill ride joypad pilots will want to take over and over, tweaking up the variable difficulty (set in increments of 1-8 per level) slightly on each pass. It's a remarkable shooter to say the least, originally appearing as a high priced coin-op throughout Japan and at finer (er, I mean richer) U.S. arcades as well.

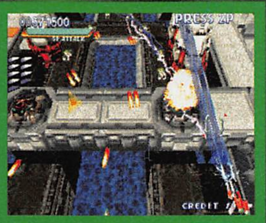
The PS version eventually made its way Stateside (via Working Designs new "Spaz" division) and for a shooter is enjoying quite a run. One thing I personally never expected was a Saturn version of the game that would not only encompass more good stuff than







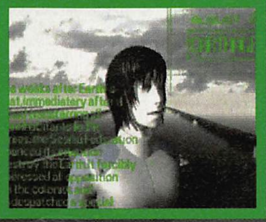














the PS version, like CG intermissions, but match it nearly poly to poly, save some transparencies (which still exist although in "Saturn screen" form), but that's what exactly what we've got.

Had WD and SOA not broken up, I'm sure many a Saturn fan would be enjoying this choice export straight away, however, that divorce seems mighty final and Sega doesn't seem real keen on the whole shooter thing, so I reckon if you've really got the itch it's time to board the next shuttle to import town.

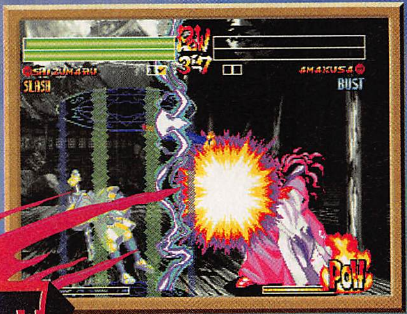
But is it worth an E ticket you ask? Oh yah, I'd say definitely so. This and *TF5* only months apart marks a fitting close to what is likely the Saturns last shooting stand before Dural comes fourth and rewrites the rules yet again. Do partake in the joy.











SAMURAI SHODOWN IV
AMAKUSA'S REVENGE





Amakusa, the forever evil-doer of the *Samurai Shodown* world, is once again at his old tricks. His menacing castle has returned, he has imprisoned the demon Zankuro in stone, and he has kidnapped the female ninja Hazuki to drain her of her energy. Growing stronger day by day, the dark cloud of his power begins to totally engulf all of Japan. The toughest warriors from around the world, a band of expert fighters joined together by a common cause, set off to Amakusa castle. Their mission - destroy the evil magician before he can become unstoppable.

Samurai Shodown 4 is an excellent progression of the historical **SNK** fighting game series, and corrected many gameplay aspects that were a bit lacking in the previous titles. The storyline was once again beefed up for each character, taunts and little touches were thrown back in, and the feel and control of the game was smoothed out greatly. With all of those updates, and the much-needed return of three older characters, the game once again had that classic *Samurai Shodown* "feel" to it. While it still couldn't beat the exceptional *SS2*, as far as being the better game, it's no doubt a close second. The only disappointing aspect of the game itself was that while many portions of the game were improved, some actually went down in quality; two examples of this are the backgrounds and character color choices (which are no where near as good as the ones in *SS3*).



Shizumaru struggles against the evil demon king!





REVIEW

SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - SNK
PUBLISHER - SNK
FORMAT - CD + CART

OF PLAYERS - 1-2
DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE
AVAILABLE - JAPAN



SHIDOSHI
I did it! My first layout! Victoly!

Like Never Experienced Before!

Up until this point, I've been very, very impressed with SNK's Saturn translations; unfortunately, *Samurai Shodown 4* hits a bit of rough road. Now, please don't get me wrong - SNK worked hard to produce a quality version of *Samurai Shodown 4* for the Saturn, and it shows. The graphics, while "squished" horizontally a bit (making the characters look skinnier), are just as good as the Neo version, and character animation is still at it's insanely high level. As well, it's been given the typical SNK CD-remix soundtrack, with some of the tunes coming out really cool in their redone state, and others being just plain odd. The problem comes in the game's speed. Since the RAM Cart transmits information slower than the Saturn's actual RAM does, relying on both at the same time can cause slowdown in some instances, and makes the over game play a bit slower (*Marvel Super Heroes* is another example of this). If you've never played *SS4* in any form but this, you'll simply think that it's a slower-paced game; if you've played the Arcade or home Neo•Geo version extensively (as I have), you'll find the decrease in speed, and the affect it has on timing, somewhat annoying. And, once again, the Saturn fighting game curse rears it's ugly head - the voices and sound effects are muffled and muted.

If you are a Saturn owner and own neither of the *Samurai* games, I'm afraid that I might be inclined to recommend that you purchase *SS3* as a first choice. If this is the only way that you'll be able to get *Samurai Shodown 4* at home, by all means get a copy - this is a quality fighting game that no one should be without. Hardcore fans of the game may be disappointed by the translation, and wish that it had been just a bit better, but most gamers will still find a great deal of enjoyment from this top-notch fighting game. Yell at me if you want, but I stand by my opinion. *S*







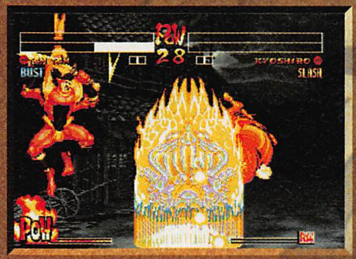




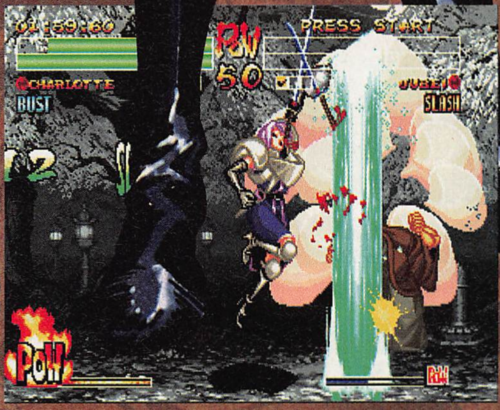


The Return of Old Favorites!

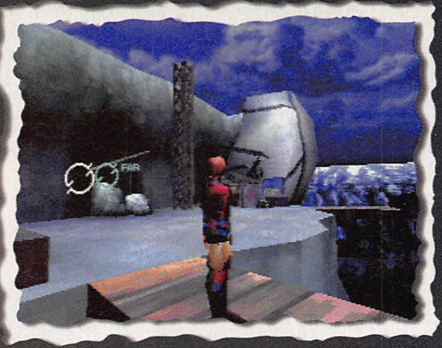




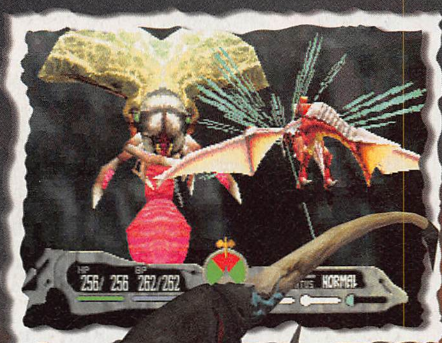
One of the complaints made about *Samurai Shodown 3* was that it cut out about half of the cast from the previous game, including some characters that were thought of as important regulars. To help rectify that, SNK brought back three of the most popular missing characters; the heart of stone mercenary Yagyu Jubei, the wildman from Green Hell, Tam Tam, and the beautiful Rose of Versailles, Charlotte Christine Colde. All three characters look exceptionally stunning in the new art style, and fit back into the mix with no real problem. It's good to see that SNK noticed the fan demand for these characters back, and that they brought them back with style. It is a shame, however, that the character's theme music didn't return along with them.





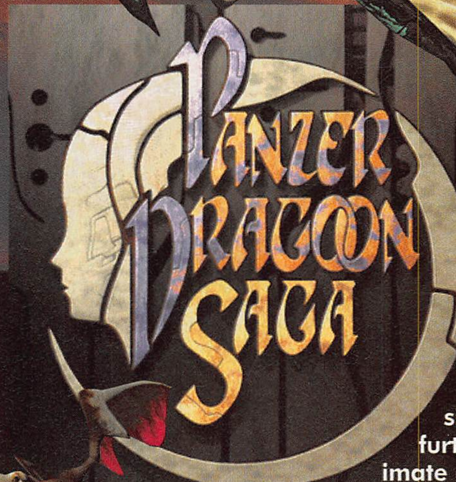






Without a doubt, the *Panzer Dragoon* games are two of the brightest stars shining in Sega's galaxy. *Zwei* in particular is probably my favorite 3D shoot-'em-up of all time (I am Winged Death baby!). So when I first heard that Team Andromeda's next *Panzer* game was going to be an RPG with number-based combat I was initially suspicious. A *Panzer* without shooting? Hmmmm. But after playing through the first disk of *Panzer Dragoon Saga* (one of a total four) I realize that the shooting action was just one of the many elements that made the previous *Panzers* so enjoyable. Just as important (to me at least) is the world in which the games are set: the Moebius influenced artwork, the pseudo-German culture, the *Nausicäa*-style organic machines and steam-based technology, the unique language—it's a universe I find extremely compelling. And whereas the previous *Panzer* games were just a quick ride through this world, *Saga* is more like an extended vacation.

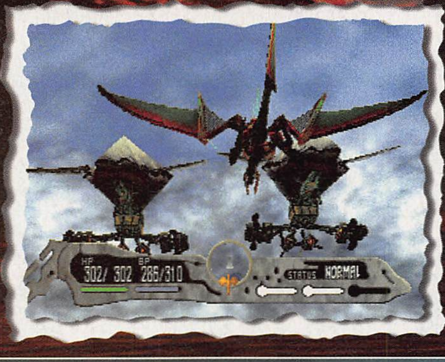
I'm not quite 100% sure of the story yet (in our version none of the CG had sound) but I think it goes something like this: You play the part of Edge, a young hunter who is assigned to protect a colony of resistance miners from the Empire. One day the miners are attacked by a giant bio-mechanical insect, and in the ensuing skirmish Edge is knocked down a mine shaft. He falls into an underground lake and climbs out in a cavern that *Panzer Dragoon* fans will recognize as the chamber from the end of *Panzer Zwei*. After a brief bit of exploration, Edge finds himself once again under attack, but this time he is rescued by a very familiar dragon. After befriending the dragon, Edge learns of an evil Empire plot and his true destiny begins to unfurl..



On the next page you will find a more detailed breakdown of how the various parts of the game fit together, but for now let me just say that *Panzer Dragoon Saga* is going to be AMAZING. The graphics are not only a marvel of technology but, as with previous *Panzer* games, beautifully realized. The character and creature designs are second to none, and the soundtrack is simply stunning. It's projects like this that further the notion of videogames as a legitimate art form. Prepare yourself... *K*







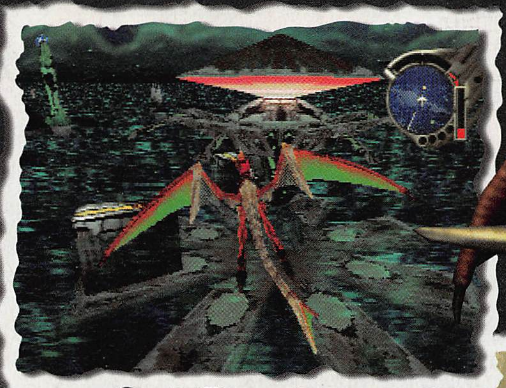


P PREVIEW | SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - TEAM ANDROMEDA	# OF PLAYERS - 1
PUBLISHER - SEGA	DIFFICULTY - N/A
FORMAT - 4 CDs	AVAILABLE - MARCH '98



KNIGHTMARE
I am counting the days till this one.









WORLD MAP

From the world map you can access both new levels, or individual areas of levels you have previously visited. An individual area could be either a town or a landscape. When attempting a new 'level' for the first time you must play all the way through that level (normally that means defeating the boss) before you return to the world map. Sega claims there will be more than 12 levels in the final version, comprising over 100 hours of gameplay.

DRAGON RIDING SECTIONS

This is where the majority of the game takes place. When riding your dragon you will explore a variety of landscapes, some of which are narrow valleys and some of which are vast open arenas.

Control in this section is both intuitive and straightforward. You adjust the angle of your dragon with the d-pad/analog cup and move forwards and backwards with L and R respectively. You are granted 360 degrees of freedom and can explore anywhere in the environment you choose. While flying pressing A or C will bring up your lock-on target and the d-pad/analog cup will then switch control to the movement of the target. Pass over an active object and the target will lock on, giving you one of several messages that inform you how you can interact with that object. These messages include 'access' (examine the object), 'break' (shoot the object), and 'enter' (pass through portal). Examine everything in the environment as many objects will often yield helpful items. While flying on your dragon you are also susceptible to attack, which leads to combat.





COMBAT

The battles in *Panzer Dragoon Saga* take place in real time, meaning you can't just wait around for your turn and then spend hours deliberating over how to attack. Time is of the essence!

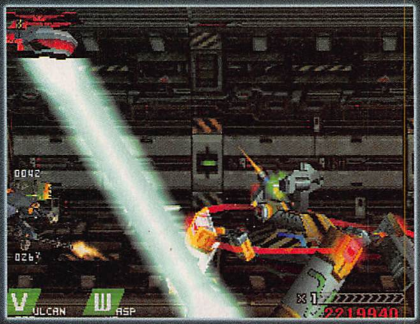
At the bottom of the screen you will see three bars, which fill up as time passes. When at least one of the bars is full, you can attack. While on your dragon you have four main forms of attack: pulse cannon, tracking dragon laser, item use and berserk (magic). The pulse cannon and dragon laser both take one bar to perform, and are identical in appearance to the previous *Panzer* games, though this time they have a more strategic function. The pulse cannon can be targeted at an individual enemy for a single focused blast, while the tracking laser will automatically target all nearby enemies up to the dragon's max lock and then fire. Berserk attacks take two bars to perform and in addition cost a certain number of Berserk Points (basically magic points). You gain more Berserk attacks as you go up levels.



Although the combat system is number based, you are free to maneuver your dragon to one of four locations around your enemy whenever you wish. By moving at the correct time you can avoid certain attacks and position yourself to take advantage of an enemy's weak spot.

ON FOOT

You access the 'on-foot' sections either directly from the world map or by flying to that location on your dragon. When you enter one of these areas you take control of Edge, and the joypad set-up is slightly different. The d-pad/analog cup now controls your movement (use B to run), and the L and R buttons control the camera. A and C still brings up your lock-on target, and you must use it to examine items, enter doors and converse with other characters. If you target a character from a distance you will even overhear what they are saying! One interesting twist is that you can visit any pedestrian location (be it town, caravan or camp) by either night or day. Different characters will be around at different times, and different events may take place.







EINHÄNDER

As Square continues its frantic attempts at conquering each and every non-RPG genre out there, it was only a matter of time before they *had* to do a shooter. That means Square has run head-long into my territory: If there is a single genre that I would consider a favorite, it would be the forgotten-by-the-American-public shooter/twitch game. Remember back in Vol. 5, Issue 4, pages 96-99 (the one with *Castlevania* on the cover, for the illiterate out there), how Storm went on a rant about the sorry shape of the American shooter scene? Well, I echo those thoughts by a factor of 10, and I'm ecstatic that maybe, just maybe, this could be a sign of their imminent invasion of American soil in huge, planet-smashing numbers. Enter Square's *Einhander*, their long-awaited venture into "non-break" shooting.

Taking a page (well, maybe the whole book) from Sony's *Philosoma*, Square has created a polygon-based shooter with some nice camera shifts and graphics that destroys the aforementioned Sony offering. Take control of one of three variations on the basic Endymion craft, and prepare to face the usual gigantic enemy armada bent on destroying the world.

Each of the three variations on your basic craft can carry a different payload of weaponry which are stolen from various foes as you send them to a twisted, smoking ruin (much like Renovation/Telenet's classic *Gaiares* on Genesis/MD). After destroying certain enemies, a weapon will appear that can be attached to the top or bottom of your ship upgrading offensive capability to 'death to all that stand in your way' proportions. Some pick-ups are better than others, especially the Riot cannon which fires out lighting strikes of immense, boss-annihilating power. For the most part, the gameplay is reminiscent of the best that horizontal scrollers represent, with some added perspective changes to boot. Furthermore, and thankfully, the game is also far from a cakewalk. It requires lightning reflexes and deft hand-eye coordination—point-and-click and RPG fans may want to sit this one out.

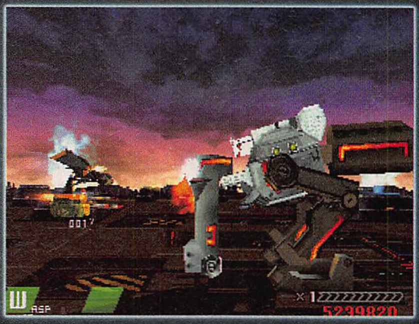
Featuring graphic madness with white-hot intensity to burn, *Einhander* grabs you by the brain stem and bombards your eyes with retina-flaying visuals that WILL send you into spasms of frothing ecstasy (special thanks to Nick Rox for the inspiration behind that sentence). Fantastic polygonal backgrounds scroll by at speeds approaching 60 FPS, with intense transparency effects and amazing lighting throughout the game. All the enemy crafts are polygon models and are practically flawless, with NONE of that aggravating PS breakup. Hell, even when the screen is engorged with engine-stultifying (break out Webster's for that one) numbers of sprites, the game shows only the slightest hint of slowdown.

And as wondrous as the graphics are, the music is right there battling it out for the single most impressive aspect of the game. Raging techno music accompanies the maddening graphics and just serves to stimulate the release of copious amounts of adrenaline in your soon-to-be-burned-out nervous system (uh sorry, it's getting a little late).

Okay, out of room big-time... Go and buy this as it seems that it may never make it here (*Tobal 2* syndrome-NOOOOO!!!!). This is as good as shooting gets on the PS. Let the world know we want our shooters!!! ***ECM***

"...RETINA-FLAYING VISUALS THAT WILL SEND YOU INTO SPASMS OF FROTHING ECSTASY..."







R REVIEW

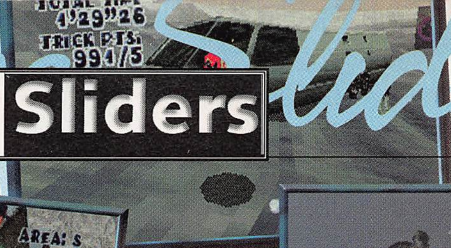
PlayStation

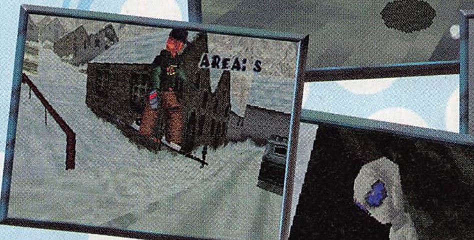
DEVELOPER - SQUARE	# OF PLAYERS - 1
PUBLISHER - SQUARE	DIFFICULTY - HARD
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - NOW (JAPAN)



ECM
One-handed? Hmmm...don't like the sound of that...

Steep Slope Sliders









Just when it looked like Victor's awesome Steep Slope Sliders was going to spend the winter in Japan, SOA suddenly followed SOE's lead by authorizing a US version. The release has been slated for late December, though. We happen to have the final import version in our hands right now, so why hold back? Right, onto the review we go!

SSS looks very, very similar to Cool Boarders 2 at first, but when it comes down to gameplay, there's no question: The snowboarding's just more fun in Steep Slope Sliders (face it Reubus!) But why? After-all, SSS's paltry nine courses certainly can't compare to CB2's sixteen. Nor can it compare to CB2's dedicated trick modes, expert modes, and its handy, appreciated 2 player split-screen mode. SSS has only four, albeit beautiful, main race courses (called "extreme"); an alpine course, complete with gates to navigate; and the "Snowboard Park", a great wide open course with plenty of opportunities for killer tricks. Four other bizzaro tracks (Space, South Pole, Wire-frame, and Asteroid) are accessed through some kinda' crazy button input.





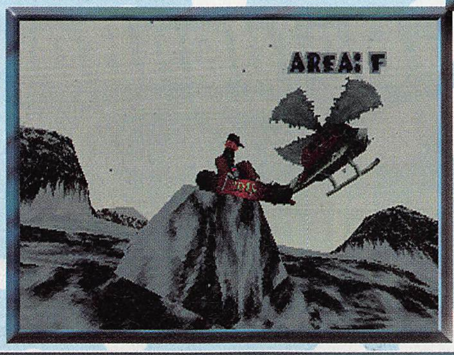


So what makes SSS such a contender? It's all about course design and control—the slopes are perfect. Whether you're in the mood for intense extreme racing through gigantic rocky moutain passes, towns, or underground tunels; a deep half-pipe; or a wild-frolic in the Park, all the courses are HUGE. Each is packed with trick-happy obstacles, air, and incredible graphics. The control is a thing of beauty! For once, somebody uses the L and R buttons effectively, as a sharp turning/switch stance method, instead of a single button. Also, L and R is used in the air for spin tricks, making for great transitional control between turning and tricks. Oh, and get this: There's a JUMP button. No more crouching down (losing all control in the process) to get ready for a jump as in CB2; SSS lets you jump anytime you damn well please. Tricks are accomplished with a Flip button, a Grab button, and as mentioned, the L and R buttons. You can also complete huge aerial flips using up or down on the d-pad. Naturally these jumps, flips, and grabs can be combined in a number of ways, producing the masses 'o tricks that win you the prizes!



That's all the space I have! Steep Slope Sliders is the perfect little one-player snowboarding game, kinda' like the way Rage Racer is the perfect single-player racing game. Plenty of secrets, a dozen cool characters (including aliens, penguins, and UFOs!), and an amazing techno/drum 'n bass soundtrack round out the package. Saturn owners simply must check this one out. *G*







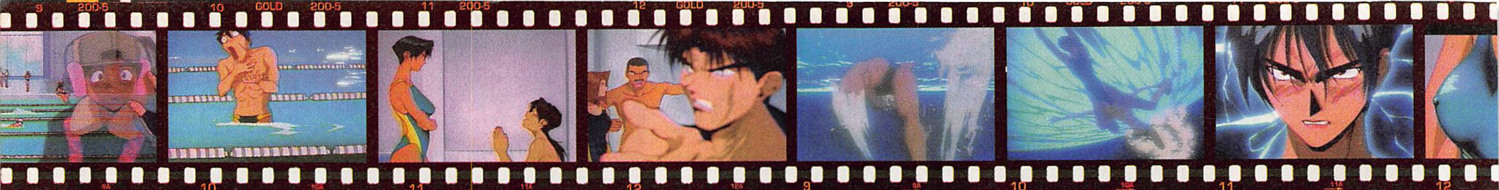
R REVIEW

SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - PACK-IN-VIDEO	# OF PLAYERS - 1
PUBLISHER - JVC	DIFFICULTY - MODERATE
FORMAT - CD	AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN

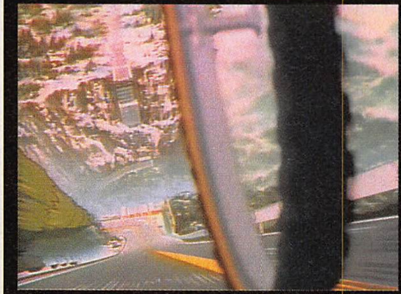


GLITCH
Time to shred with an alien head!

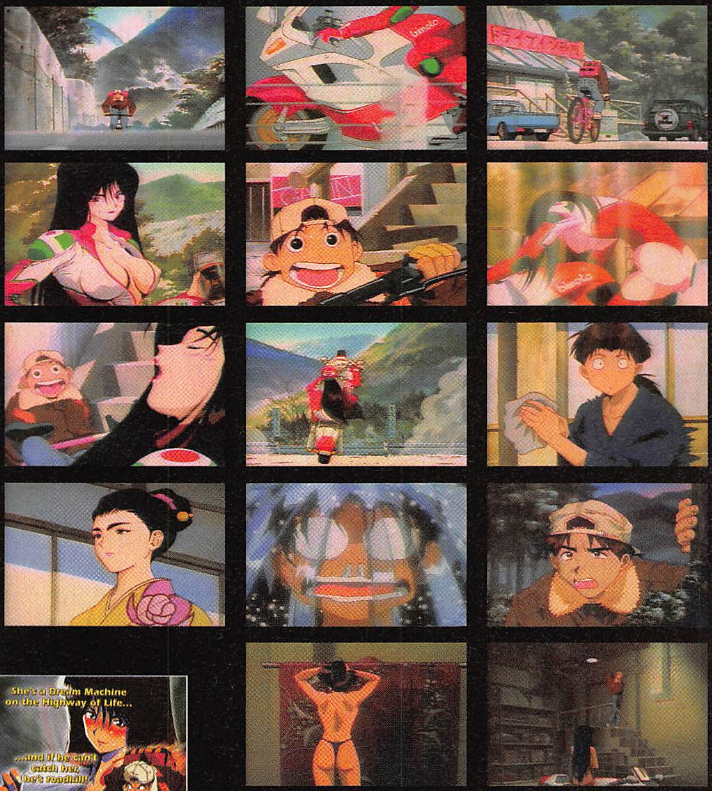


AnimeFan

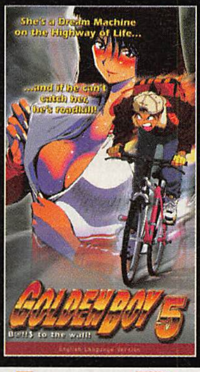




Truth be told, initially I wasn't that fond of GoldenBoy. Leaning more towards fantasy and serious drama for my anime fix, the kooky antics of an over-sexed x-law student, riding his mountain bike from job to job in search of adventure and sex, sex, sex, just didn't do it for me... initially. I have come, however, to quite enjoy this series, both for its bold humor and excellent portrayal of curious youth. A better dubbed anime you'll not find (Kintaro is played perfectly by ADV graphic artist Douglas Smith on a sugar high - true story) and the sound quality is excellent throughout. Mostly, though, in episodes 4 & 5 you get more of what GB is famous for; beautiful babes and big boobs, along with great one liners you'll want to use over and over. For instance, when Kintaro spots a sexy biker, he exclaims, "Baby, my kickstand is up" or "I wish I was a motorcycle seat!" Both episodes are genuinely funny and keep with the GB tradition of high quality animation and superb production values. I highly recommend them both. The ultimate over 17 stocking stuffer? You be the judge. - *E.Storm*







AF Review

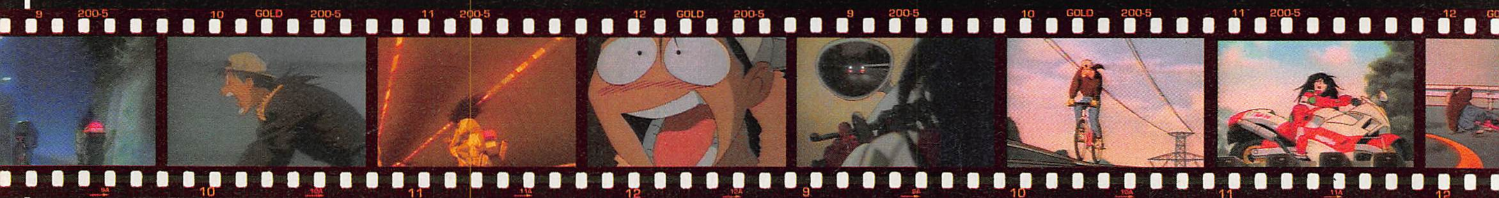
GoldenBoy

Dubbing
Animation
Story
Soundtrack

B+

GoldenBoy



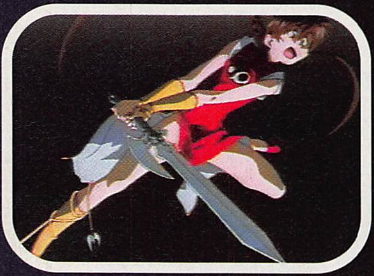




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In Double Trouble, Double Jeopardy, one of the first and most notable modern anime characters to reach American shores (and everyone's favorite Devil Hunter) returns in her sixth dubbed ADV feature. In this episode, which features the usual doses of school girl comedy, mystic drama and epic battles (and the usual touch of nekidness), Yohko must battle a Devil Hunter double bred from a grudge of the grannys! Grandma's got a twin sister who's been training a devil hunter of her own, and this imposter shows up and begins infringing on Yohko's earthly territory. All hell breaks loose, literally, as their epic battle unleashes a furious demon in stunning Yohko style. The action packed, exceptionally animated climax is one of the best in Devil Hunter history as Asuza 2, Ayako, and Yohko struggle for answers as they fight a demon who can freeze them in their tracks one at a time. Having grown accustomed to ADV's Yohko dub, I rate this one as very good, (forgiving the gratuitous Highlander and X-Files references). Pick up parts 2, 3&4-ever, 5 (Hell on Earth) and 6, and have yourself a Yohko-a-thon! Now's the time! - *E.Storm*



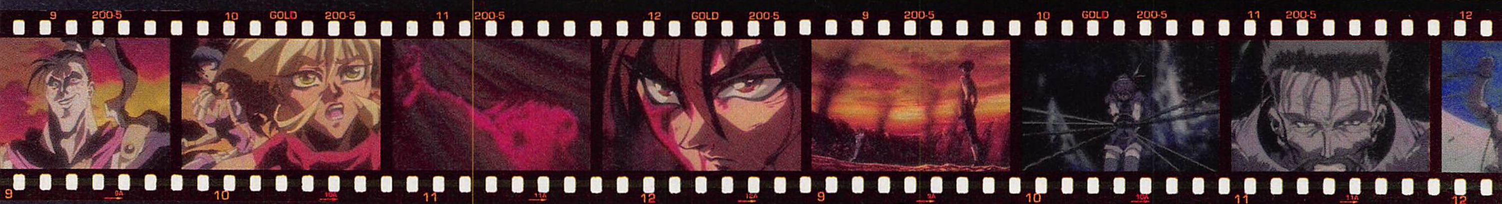
AF Review

animation / dubbing / story / music — F D C B A

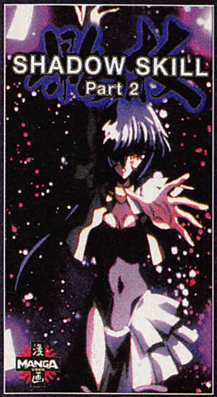
B

Devil Hunter Yohko 6.





Shadow Skill Part 2



IF HORRIFIC BOX ART AND THE WORST DUB EVER CAN'T KILL IT... WELL, MAYBE YOU SHOULD CHECK IT OUT!

AF Review

animation / dubbing / story / music — F D C B A

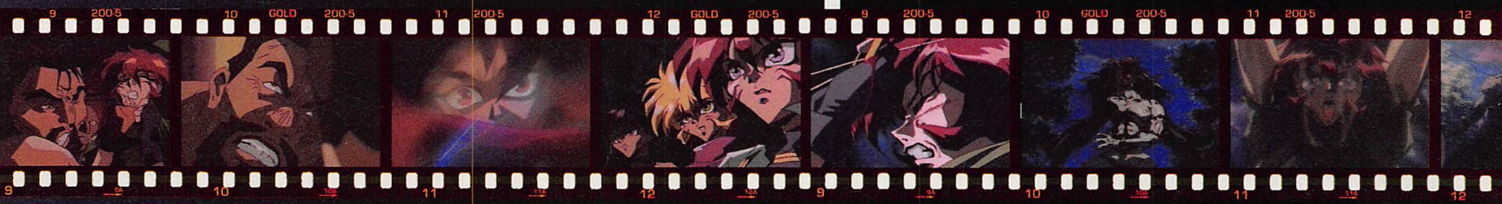
B-

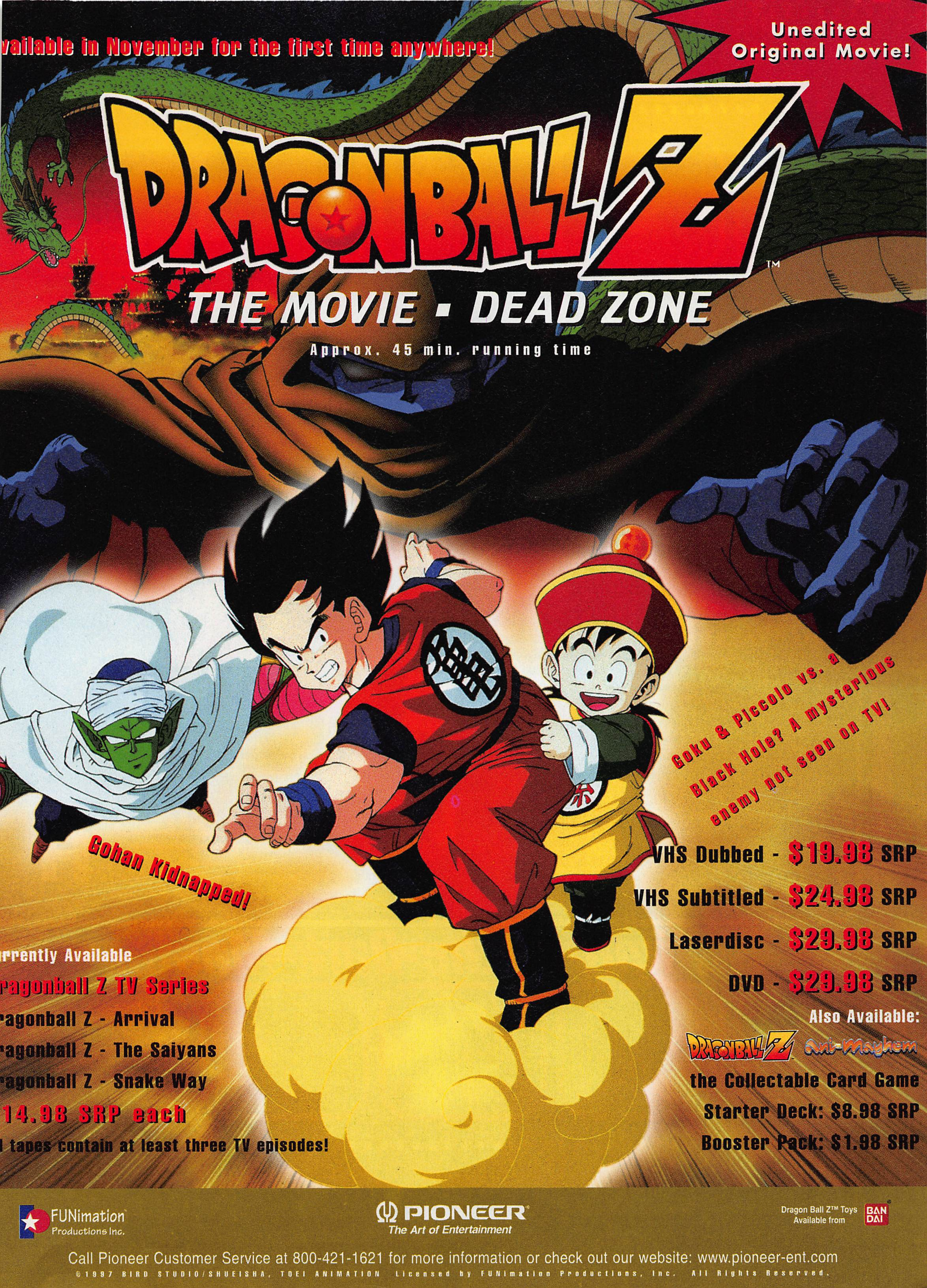




Talk about your double edged swords... On the one hand, Shadow Skill is an excellent action series, combining flashes of great animation, inspired art, and a strong story. On the other, it is so poorly dubbed that it's nearly impossible to watch and take seriously at the same time. The story follows Gua (pronounced Gow), a boy orphaned at 10 after bandits killed his family, and his adoptive sister, Ella. Ella is a true warrior of the Shadow Skill, an ancient fighting technique developed by female slaves using only their legs (as their hands were shackled). In part one (available now at a video retailer near you), Gau became a great warrior after confronting his fears, and Ella.

Part 2 picks up 10 years later, and now Gau (known as Gau Ban of the Black Howling) is a mighty warrior. He sets out on two adventures after an initial flashback sequence, which chronicles Gau's earlier days when he feared even speaking. Next, alongside Spellcaster Fowari, the siblings take up with Quo in a battle against The King of the Moon to avenge her slain people. And finally, rounding out the 90 minute part 2, Ella and Fowari are turned against each other by an evil nemesis from the past. Shadow Skill's look and feel is one of adventure and pride. The series has excellent music, phenomenal fight scenes, and an art style all its own that I find extremely appealing. If not for Gau's pseudo New York accent and demons that talk like news anchors, I'd score the dubbed version a full grade higher. - *E. Storm*





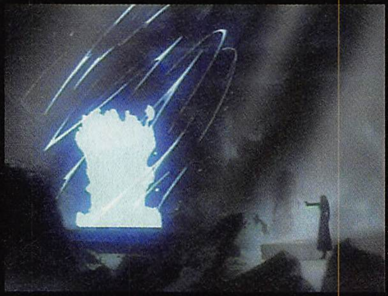
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Besides being one of the best dubs I've ever heard, Twilight of the Dark Master is, simply put, one of the best horror/sci-fi animes I've ever seen.

Stay with me now... All things were created by The Great Mother. She loved her humans, but found them frail and weak. So, in an effort to strengthen the race and teach them how to fight, she created fierce demons. But the demons proved too strong and threatened mankind, so The Great Mother created guardians to act as allies for the humans against the demons. Now, the battle lines have been drawn between demon and guardian, linked forever by a bitter hatred with mankind hanging in the balance. The year is 2089, only one race will survive, and you get to watch. This is the essence of the story, which unfolds and finally climaxes with such poetic drama, that among the blood-stained debris of 50 minutes of bloody carnage you may just shed a tear for Agie and Shizuka, two humans who lay at the heart of Twilight. The animation quality is well above average, the art, a blend of old and new styles (kind of a Wicked City meets Armitage) is wonderful, and the soundtrack is excellent. With art direction reminiscent of Blade Runner, a cast of exotic, interesting characters, excellent acting, and a hardcore story, Twilight is one of '97's biggest surprises. I can't recommend it highly enough. P.S. This sure would make on hell of a video game.! *- E. Storm*



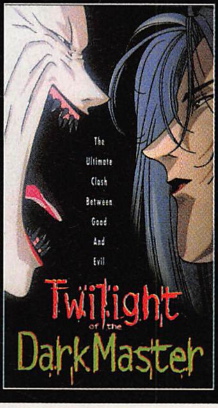


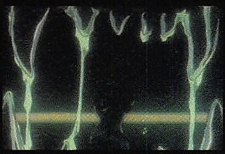













Twilight of the Dark Master










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AnimeFan Monthly Top 5

A.D.V. FILMS

Reader's Top 5

af

That's right anime fans, it's time to speak up and let us know what you're watching! List your top 5 favorite anime and send it in, attention Anime Fan! As always, we wouldn't dream of asking you to go to all the trouble of writing, mailing and stamp-licking for nothing: We'll enter you in our bi-monthly drawing (one entry per person, per month) for the 20-inch Eva model pictured below and Evangelion 1 thru 6!! Two additional prizes will be given away each month. 1st prize - a full set of Burn Up W and a Burn Up W T-shirt and 2nd prize - a full set of Devil Hunter Yohko courtesy of AD Vision!



And the winners are...

Grand Prize:	First Prize:	Second Prize:
Linc Fain	**Kristine Ben**	**Beau L. McGinnis**
Powder Springs, GA	Conoga Park, CA	Gulfport, FL



E Storm

1 Evangelion
2 Venus Wars
3 Peacock King
4 Saber Marionette J
5 Burn Up W



Shidoshi

1 Tenchi Muyo!
2 Neon Genesis Evangelion
3 Kiki's Delivery Service
4 Graveyard of the Fireflies
5 Koy: The Metal Idol



Nick Rox

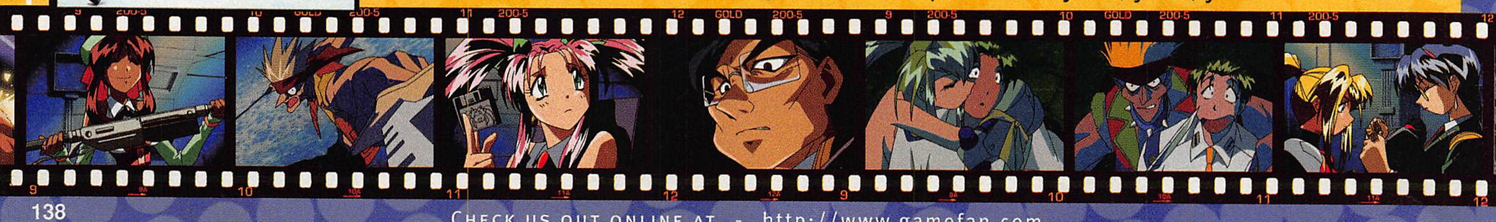
1 Shinseiki Evangelion
2 Kaze no Tani no Nausicäa
3 Tenkuu no Shiro Laputa
4 Tenkuu no Escaflowne
5 Top wo Nerae! Gunbuster



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OTHER STUFF

Happy Holidays!!! Welcome to another segment of the industry's most covert (and downright litigious) rumblings...

Final Fantasy 8 Finished? Done, that is...

Yes, according to reliable sources at Square Los Angeles, the team responsible for *FF 7* is in the stages of putting the finishing touches on *Final Fantasy 8* in Hawaii. Oddly enough it appears that it has been done for more than four months, and is now under going bug testing and translation of the text for the US version. The only question now is when will the game be released. My best guess would be Summer 1998, and expect Square to drop this bomb on Enix as they unveil *Dragon Quest* to a frothing public. Most importantly, it would seem that Square is shooting for a simultaneous launch in the US and Japan (though I'll believe that when I see it). Last, but certainly not least, the same sources also state that *Final Fantasy 9* is already undergoing preliminary design. The big question of course being: For PS or PS2? If I had a basket and some eggs they'd all be on PS2...

More Capcom Sequel Mania?

Final Fight EX which sounded like a very respectable sequel to the greatest side scrolling fighting game ever made (*ed's note:* Streets of Rage 2 *was the best, actually*) could have some problems... if you don't own a PlayStation. It appears that the game is being developed solely for the PlayStation, skipping arcades and an oft-rumored Saturn rev entirely. We'll keep ya posted on this one. The next announcement is that *Street Fighter EX 2* is heading for the PlayStation and not Model 3 as previously expected. The new characters that we know of for sure are: Skullomania Stronger (Skullomania has a hook now) and Hokuto's sister, Nanase, are in the game. It will ship to arcades in Spring of 1998 and will be released for the home in July or August of 1998 in Japan. *Resident Evil 2* is on its way to the US, set for a January 20th release. Word on the motion picture is that the script is not even finished and the movie wont be out until late 1998. Take your time, guys; we don't' want another *Street Fighter*. Some more good news from the fight-meisters at Capcom is that the team responsible for *RE 2* is already working on another game (not *RE 3*), and it should be out sometime in 1998. *RE 3* is said to be on the drawing boards for Play Station 2.

Nintendo's 1997 Space World show report part 1.... by Yoshi 3:16

F-Zero X

Even though Nintendo uh, misinformed us about the release of this game (the date changed from December of this year in Japan till June in Japan) it looks utterly amazing. *F-Zero X* is only 60% complete and will be whopping 128 megs in memory size. As well, a 64DD version will be released late 4th quarter 1998 in Japan. The game was playable and featured 24 tracks and over 30 vehicles to choose from. The game runs at a screaming 60 frames, but the music needs some heavy work (perhaps a larger cart is in order).

The Legend of Zelda: The Ocarina of Time

Zelda 64 was pushed back to an April release in Japan (the US release is July) and the price was announced at being only 6800Yen ($59 in the US). The game will be 256 megs in size (32megabytes) and runs at a smooth 30 frames per second. *Zelda* had a revolutionary new camera system that was much better than *Mario 64* and the music was very impressive (see, an extra 128 megs does make a difference). Alas, the 64DD version has been to pushed back to a '99 release date at best.

Super Mario RPG 2

Even though it won't hit until late 1998, *Mario RPG 2* for the 64DD looked stunning. The environments are now fully 3D polygon worlds but Mario himself looks like a 2D sprite. The game itself is still like the first game, an isometric adventure. *Mario RPG 2* will be released for the 64DD and will not be made for cartridge N64.

Here's a list of all the games at the show:

Nintendo: Playable

Banjo & Kazooie - 128 megs
Diddy Kong Racing - 128 megs
F-Zero X - 128 megs
NBA Basketball - 128 megs
1080 Degree Snow Boarding - 128 megs
The Legend of Zelda: The Ocarina of Time - 256 megs
Yoshi's Story - 128 megs

Nintendo: On tape

EarthBound 3 - 64DD
Jungle Emperor Leo - 128 megs
Mario Artist - 64DD
Picture Maker - 64DD
Pikachu Genki de Chu - 64DD
Polygon Maker - 64DD
Pocket Monsters - 64DD
Pocket Monster Stadium - 64DD
Sim City - 64DD
Super Mario RPG 2 - 64DD

Third-Party Playable:

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Sim City 2000
Sim Copter
Snow Speeder
Sonic Wings Assault
Space Circus
Super Robot Spirits
Sumo64
Tamagotchi World
Top Gear Rally
Wild Choppers

At the Space world show Nintendo debuted four new peripherals for the N64. The first is a Capture Cartridge. With this device you can screen capture images from a VCR, any game system, or a camcorder. Basically any device that outputs a video signal can be grabbed with this cartridge. The Capture will be released in July around the same time as the 64DD. The Nintendo Mouse was shown for the *Mario Artist* games, which will make it much easier to alter all those pics you grab. The Mouse will be released in July 1998. The 64 Gameboy add-on is exactly that, a Gameboy add-on that fits on the back of your N64 controller. With it you can send data from your Gameboy to your N64 and vice versa. The first game that uses the 64GB is *Pocket Monsters Stadium.* Again the 64GB will be released in July 1998. The last device is the Voice Recognition Headset. With this piece of kit you can talk to directly to your game. The first game that you can communicate with is *Pikachu Genki De Chu* and should be released in the 2nd quarter of 1998. The 64DD was delayed till July 1998 and the US version won't hit until 4th quarter.

Sega Changes Dural Specs Again...

Yes, they've changed again. The Dural specs have been modified just a little and may not reflect what the gamer will get in September of 1998 in Japan next year-in other words, take it all with a truckload of salt until Sega debuts it at E3. Here are the specs:

CPU: MIPS R5000: 80%-90% probability this will be the CPU in Dural for one reason: it's very inexpensive.

Hitachi SH4: is looking more and more unlikely due to prohibitive cost.

RAM: 8megabytes of main RAM
2 megabytes for video RAM

Res: 320 x 224 - 640 x 240

Graphics chip: Power VR2 capable of displaying 1.8 million polygons at 30 frames per second

Operating System: Based on Microsoft's Windows CE and Direct X

Modem: Sega wants to include it but it may be too expensive since they want to use a 56k modem (bah, give me a cable modem, or give me death).

Memory Card: Yes, and Sega's memory card will have an LCD screen right on the card.

Controller: Analog stick with a D-pad, no word on how many buttons, though.

When US: 1999 for $199.99

When Japan: September-November 1998 for $299.99

Plenty of games are in development: *Scud Racer, Metal Gear Solid, Virtua Fighter 3, Virtua On 2, Virtua Striker 3, Daytona 2, Power Slave 2, Lost World, Nights 2*, and a fourth foray into the world of *Panzer Dragoon.*

Well there goes another Other Stuff. It's all 100 percent true, with no wild speculation whatsoever. Join us next time when we'll have even more juicy tid-bits for your delight and delectation... Until then...

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FROM A (RATHER UN-FESTIVE) CAVE DEEP INSIDE AGOURA...

CHRISTMAS??!!! I HATE CHRISTMAS!!! Great swathes of mail to wade through, back-breaking sacks to drag into the van, me hernia's playing up, and lil' Jimmy must've been a kiss-ass little boy this year... I've got the entire contents of Toys R Us to deliver to his friggin' house!! But... ya know what saves me from goin' POSTAL again?! Letters from the wide variety of FREAKS who read this journal. There's people almost as mad as me out there! Don't believe me? Then read on...

TOMB RAIDER... FROM THE TUNDRA

Dear Postmeister,

Due to the fact that we already have a president that has difficulty distinguishing between fantasy and reality, I've decided to do my part in preventing this from happening again, by writing you this letter, with the hopes that it will prevent you from running [for president].

I am an incurable *Tomb Raider* addict and am wondering if the musical tracks, from *Tomb Raider*, were created specifically for the game, or if they were chosen from pre-released material. More importantly, can we expect to hear the same god-like quality music in *Tomb Raider 2*.

Finally, I've heard nothing of plans for a PC version of *TR2*. Would it be too much to hope for a PC version, any time soon? Oh Postmeister, show me your wisdom.

Perry Canfield
Ketchikan, Alaska

Dear Perry,

Show you my wisdom?! Why I oughta... oh wait, that's a good thing... heh. Anyway, I'm not sure how this letter will help prevent anymore unchecked dementia, but seeing as you know our address, I won't push the matter. Even though I can't help but wonder how a person, from Alaska, can be any more grounded than our President. Sure, he's from Arkansas, but Alaska?! Come on, isn't it dark for six months at a time up there? Add in that kerazy light show called the Aurora Borealis and you've got a sure-fire recipe for psychosis.

Anyway, enough with the insults. As far as the Tomb Raider *and* Tomb raider 2 *music is concerned, it's all original. Very talented programmers spent many hours giving Lara's adventures the best in background music (and backsides, <ahem>).*

And yes, Tomb Raider 2 *will be putting in an appearance on one of those evil machines with some intense 3D accelerated madness. Of course, getting it to work on one of those devices is a completely different can o' worms. "General protection fault?" "Invalid page fault?" Hooohaarr!!! Where's my AXE?!*

CROFT CRAZY

Dear Postmeister,

I am an owner of a PlayStation, and darn proud of it, but I have a question that has been racking my brain. Why don't PlayStation games use their 32-bit power, to the fullest? Now I'm not saying that PlayStation games don't kick mega-butt, but I do feel that the games could be a bit smoother. For example, *Tomb Raider's* scene that shows Lara and the Mexican guide walking through the Alps, is spectacular! So why doesn't the rest of the game play that way? Also, I have some questions that I would like to ask:

1) Does Lara Croft have a boyfriend?
2) Is *Goldeneye* coming out for the PlayStation?
3) Could you give me some information on *Metal Gear Solid*?
4) Is *Goeman 64* coming out for the PlayStation?

Matthew Fox
Milford, Connecticut

Dear Matt,

True, we haven't seen the best that the PlayStation is capable of, but that is something that will take time. Developers need time to learn how to utilize the tools they are given. It took years for Genesis developers to get a handle on what the Genesis could do; you can't just wake up and start developing Earthworm Jims *and* Vectormans. *Besides, there are other issues here...*

Get over this Lara Croft thing; it's unhealthy. When Roger Daultry sang of Pictures of Lily *or when Peter Wolf belted out* Freeze Frame, *they were thinking more along the lines of flesh and blood, not polygons. And when it comes right down to it, Lara ain't all that—I'm more a Mai Shiranui man, myself. And who knows, maybe Lara doesn't even like boys—didn't think of that, did you? I suggest talking with Perry. He, apparently, has a firm grasp on reality. As for the answers to your other questions:*

2) HAHAHAHAHA!! A Rare game on a system other than Nintendo's?! Why that's like Shidoshi swearing off Sailor Moon *and taking an interest in the opposite sex; it ain't gonna happen.*

3) Certainly! It comes on a small optical disc capable of storing in excess of 600 MB of information which is then read by a laser housed in your PS console and then translated by the various processors in said console into a fantastic game that millions will enjoy for years to come (Read all about MGS last issue).

4) Well, the answer to this question follows along the lines of those given in answer 2. Point being: Don't hold yer breath (especially about Shidoshi).

DISTRAUGHT IN DILLONVALE

Dear Posty,

I want to get to the point. I must ask why all of your personnel have a problem with Ultra 64 games? Or better yet, think PlayStation games are the best thing since sliced bread? Everyone at GameFan should start giving Ultra64 some respect. I think that the 64 is far better than the PSX, but that is my opinion. All I ask is that you give the 64 a fair shake!!!

James Perdue
Dillonvale, Ohio

Dear Jimmy (can I call you Jimmy?),

Before we go about showering Nintendo's 64-bit machine with respect, I suggest you, at least, show a pebble of your own by at least calling the machine by its actual name: it's the N64, chief, not the Ultra64.

We here, at GameFan, have plenty of respect for the N64. But a machine is only as good as the games that come out for it. The fact of the matter is the N64 has very few games. On top of that, many of them don't even come close to utilizing the strength of the machine. Last time I checked, we rated Goldeneye, Extreme G *and* Top gear Rally *quite highly. I'm not even going to get into our obsession with* Diddy Kong Racing *and the upcoming* Zelda 64. *The fact is, PlayStation is putting out the most games right now, and if you read our mag, you'll notice we hammer many of their titles, too. Now I can't wait to get a boatload of letters complainin' that we don't cover enough Genesis stuff, and that we're biased towards Gameboy, sheesh!*

And for the record, I took a poll, and discovered that many GameFan employees weren't all that thrilled with the notion of sliced bread... Reubus in particular.

MORE GAMING DEVIANT SCRAWLINGS

Dear Postmeister,

HOW ARE YOU!!! OK, ENOUGH WITH THE NICE TALK!!!! LET ME GET STRAIGHT TO THE POINT (DID I TELL YOU GUYS, THAT YOU ARE ONE OF THE COOLEST MAGAZINES OUT THERE, AND I'M NOT JUST SAYING THIS FOR YOU GUYS TO PUBLISH MY LETTER)!... ANYWAYS, ON THE OCTOBER ISSUE, MR NICK ROX HAD A REVIEW FOR *RE TRIAL VERSION* WHICH I MAY SAY AND I CAN BET MY WEEKLY ALLOWANCE THAT IS GOING TO BE ONE OF THIS OR NEXT YEAR'S BEST! ANYWAYS, WHEN I HEARD THAT THERE WAS A *TRIAL VERSION* WITH THE RE *DIRECTOR'S CUT*, I HAD TO GO OUT AND MAX OUT ALL MY CREDIT CARDS AND HAD TO TELL MY PARENTS TO STOP GIVING ME ALLOWANCE, LOCK ME IN MY ROOM OR SHOOT ME ON THE LEG SO I WOULDN'T GO OUT AND BUY THE *DIRECTOR'S CUT* CAUSE I DIDN'T WANT TO SPOIL THE FUN OF PLAYING *RE 2 TRIAL VERSION* UNTIL THE REAL ONE CAME OUT... BUT MR ROX WROTE IN HIS REVIEW THAT THERE WAS A ONE HOUR PLAYABLE DEMO OF *MEGAMAN NEO* INCLUDED WITH THE DEMO I LIMP TO MY ROOM , BROKE MY SISTER'S PIGGY BANK WITH MY GOOD LEG, BORROW MY PARENT'S CAR AND RAN (WELL, NOT REALLY) AND BOUGHT IT ONLY FOR THAT REASON, I WANT TO PLAY WITH THE LITTLE BLUE GUY! AND GUESS WHAT?!!!!!! GIVE UP?!!!!!!!! THERE WAS NO LITTLE BLUE GUY THAT I COULD PLAY WITH. WHERE DOES ROX GET HIS GAMES??? WISH GAME HEAVEN??? HOW DARE HE DECEIVE US 22 YEAR OLD, STILL LIVING AT HOME, STILL GETTING ALLOWANCE FROM MOMMY AND DADDY BEGGING FOR MONEY EVERY TIME A GOOD GAME COMES OUT, A COLLEGE DROP-OUT, INSPIRING [*you mean 'aspiring'*] U.S. PRESIDENT... NEED I SAY MORE?! [*no, please don't*] I WAS MISLED TO BELIEVE THAT I COULD PLAY FOR AN HOUR WITH A LITTLE BLUE GUY IN 3D. NOW I GET TO PLAY WITH LEON FOR 20 MIN!!!!!! ARGHHHHHHHHH!!! <snip!>

Joseph Herrera,
Morristown, New Jersey

Dear Ranting Halfwit,

Turn the Caps Lock off, and STEP AWAY from the computer... this is the GRAMMAR POLICE. Please ensure you utilize all forms of basic grammar - including (but not limited to) periods, paragraphs, actual sentences, lower case lettering - in your next missive (not that we'll be printing any more of your rantings). Regarding your game-related problem, I suggest you locate a Game Shark and check Mr Rox's Hocus Pocus section... that'll really ruin your enjoyment of the game!!

The 'blue guy' is available in 3D polygon demo form in the IMPORT version of DC. *Got it?!! Sheesh, I did some covert Morristown water-supply contamination missions back when I was on the Force, but I was told the virus I planted would only lead to* mild *hair-loss and derangement, and not dementia and inane waffling. Oh well.*

Okay, send me some turkey, I'm off to bury all this extra Christmas mail in a field. I'll be back in 98 ready to take you all on!! Arrooooogaaaaa!!!!

Write to me or I'll run for President!

The Postmeister
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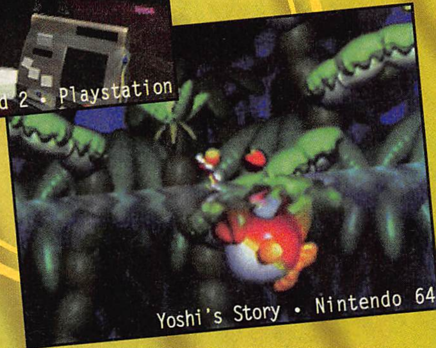


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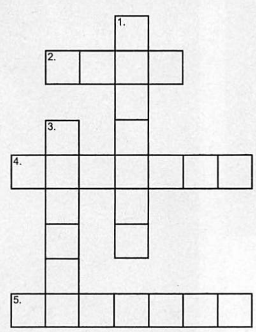
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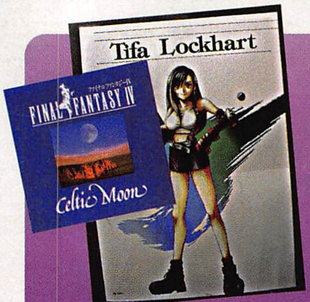
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Nintendo Video Games



DIDDY KONG RACING NINTENDO 64 The race of the year has just begun. Ladies and Gentlemen introducing Diddy Kong, Conker, and Banjo in their first ever racing extravaganza. ***Call!***



BANJO AND KAZOOIE U.S. And we thought that Mario 64 was the end it all game when we first witnessed it... Wrong: Banjo & Kazooie introduces a new beginning. ***CALL!***



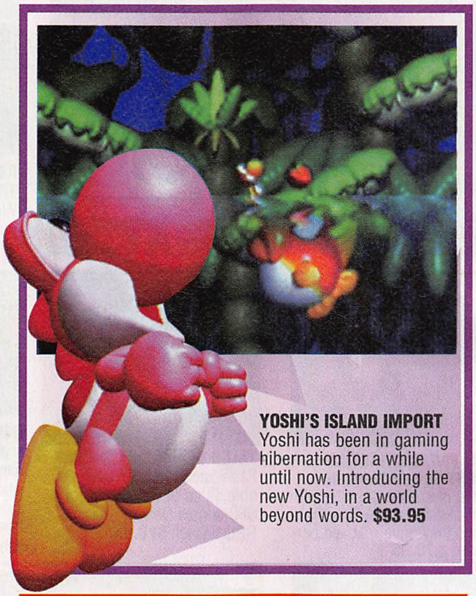
HYPER OLYMPIC IMPORT Bring the Olympics into your living room. The N64 is really starting to AMAZE. Is that real snow??? **$83.95**



CHAMELEON TWIST IMPORT Mr. Chameleon you have done what was undone, having fun while you run in the bristlemis sun! **$83.95**



GOEMON # 5 IMPORT If you haven't met my friend yet, now is the time.**$79.95**



YOSHI'S ISLAND IMPORT Yoshi has been in gaming hibernation for a while until now. Introducing the new Yoshi, in a world beyond words. **$93.95**



AEROFIGHTERS ASSAULT U.S. Nothing can prepare you for this N64 assault. ***CALL!***



REV LIMIT IMPORT I think we have waited long enough for this game don't you think? Actually it was worth the wait, GOOD STUFF! ***CALL!***



WILD CHOPPERS IMPORT The most realistic flight control ever to hit home. (Finally) Military action and bullet carnage galore. **$89.95**



AERO GAUGE IMPORT As the anticipation grows daily for the ultra cool F-Zero 64, Aero will ease the pain nicely. **$93.95**



DORAEMON IMPORT Based on one of Japan's most lovable anime characters comes a 3D Mario-esque style action game. Choose from 1 of 5 different characters. Never coming to the States. **$79.95**



SUPER ROBOT SPIRITS IMPORT Leave it to Japan to bring over a Gundam fighter to the monster 64. A series that will never die, thank God! This game rules. **$89.95**

Insane prices on some insane Nintendo 64 games!

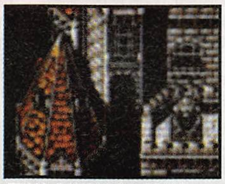
STAR WARS SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE U.S.	$39.95
MARIO KART 64 U.S.	$39.95
YUKE YUKE TROUBLE MAKER IMPORT	$39.95
WAR GODS U.S.	$39.95
BOMBERMAN 64 IMPORT	$69.95
BLAST DOZER 64 IMPORT	$19.95
NINTENDO 64 CONVERTER	$11.95



Super Famicom Software



DRAGON BALL Z HYPER DIMENSION SFAM Enter the literally dimension with Bandai's last installment on a 16 bit format. Enhanced graphic force and 2D blistering abound. **$83.95**



FINAL FANTASY 5 SFAM Experience the twisting story of the FF that never landed on our shores. **$69.95**



SECRET OF MANA 3 SFAM one of the top selling Sfam RPG series of all time. **$83.95**



SAILOR MOON SUPER S SFAM Sailor Moon scouts join together for one final female pound. **$79.95**



SUPER FAMICOM SPECIAL ! The two top companies of the RPG realm created two masterful titles in the 16bit arena a few years ago. If you never picked these titles up, now is the time.
ROMANCING SAGA 3 Square soft SFAM **$44.95**
STAR OCEAN Enix SFAM **$59.95**

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Sega Saturn Software



SOUL HACKERS IMPORT The Megamix Tensei series (Persona) has always been one of my favorites. Soul brings about a new evil novel-esque feel to an already dazzling series. **$68.95**

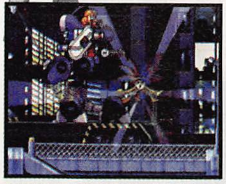




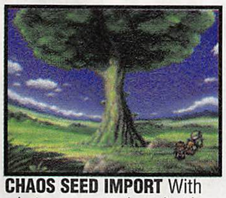
GRANDIA IMPORT OK so we stopped advertising Grandia, they said it was next year. Guess what, we are happy to announce that this Christmas the splendor will arrive after all. **$68.95**



ALL JAPAN PRO WRESTLING FEATURING VIRTUA FIGHTERS IMPORT **$68.95**



SILHOUETTE MIRAGE IMPORT Join Shaina the crossbreed! Silhouette Mirage, in her pursuit for...??? **$63.95**



CHAOS SEED IMPORT With what appears to be a battle engine similar to Chrono Trigger, Chaos Seed should provide us with long hours of RPG bliss. **$69.95**



XMEN VS STREETFIGHTER IMPORT I know, I know, advertise it, then remove it, advertise it, then drop it. Sorry about that, but when a game gets pushed back 37 times it makes it hard. Finally it has arrived, let the beatings begin!!! **$63.95**



LUNAR MAGICAL SCHOOL IMPORT Remember this game? After a slight delay, school has begun. Nothing like a good old Lunar adventure. **$63.95**



KING OF THE FIGHTERS 96 IMPORT With more fighters than any other 2D fighter and custom team edit, KOF'69 is a must-own title.**$43.95**



SAMURAI SHODOWN 4 IMPORT An absolute @*&#!?!# blood bath. All followers of the Samurai series must own this 4th installment. **$58.95**



R?MJ IMPORT Prepare to visit the hospital this December, YOU SIMPLY WONT BELIEVE THIS GAME! **$69.95**



DEAD OR ALIVE IMPORT When the Saturn rocks, it rocks. Tecmo pulls off an astonishing feat, quality, quality, quality! **$63.95**



COTTON 2 IMPORT Man, this was a hot title on PC engine and mega drive. The arcade version breathes excellence, the Saturn port?, broom brilliance. **$69.95**



DRAGON BALL Z LEGENDS IMPORT The game that never dies, still our most popular title to date. Why ?, purchase now to solve the mystery. **$43.95**



SAMURAI SHOWDOWN RPG IMPORT Witness the Samurai clan in their first ever RPG. Packed full of hellacious monstrosities and melanomic questing. **$49.95**

GUN FRONTIER IMPORT I love coin-op shooter conversions, especially on the Saturn. This game supports my desire. **$69.95**

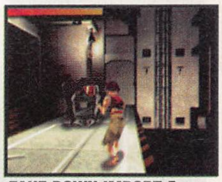




MARIA IMPORT Whether you pick up the SS or PS version of this game you will see, this is one eerie title. **$63.95**



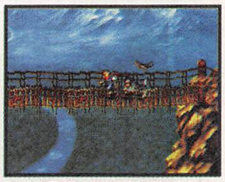
THUNDER FORCE 5 IMPORT Shooter of the world, you heard me, shooter of the world. **$59.95**



FAKE DOWN IMPORT From the creator of Akira. A masterful title that was worth the wait. **$64.95**



KING OF THE FIGHTERS '97 The 2D fighting festival of the century! **$79.95**



SAMURAI SHOWDOWN RPG IMPORT NEO GEO CD Totally playable in Japanese and never ever coming to the states. HELLO? **$59.95**



FATAL FURY REAL BOUT SPECIAL IMPORT NEO GEO CD The return of the Bogard family and friends is absolute insanity. Enhanced backdrops and added character animation make this a winner. **$73.95**

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FINAL FANTASY 7 FIRST SERIES KEY CHAINS The takeover series of all continues to pour out merchandise on top of merchandise. Awesome products made for all FF lovers. Get the whole set of FF7 first series keychains right now ! **$28.95**



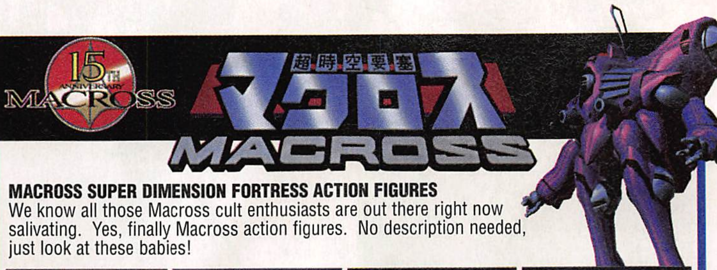
STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 2 SD KEYCHAIN COLLECTION: Another house hold series with merchandise mayhem everywhere! Get the whole SFA2 keychain set right now ! **$28.95**

ROCKMAN X AND 8 FIGURES: The last of an extinct breed! We are sorry to say that one of the hottest figure series ever are not being made anymore. Fortunately Game Cave was able to score one last RX and R8 figure to add to your collection. Rockman X "all X" and Rockman 8 Rush on sale right now! **$29.95 each.** Get em while you can!

ROCKMAN 10th ANNIVERSARY







MACROSS SUPER DIMENSION FORTRESS ACTION FIGURES
We know all those Macross cult enthusiasts are out there right now salivating. Yes, finally Macross action figures. No description needed, just look at these babies!



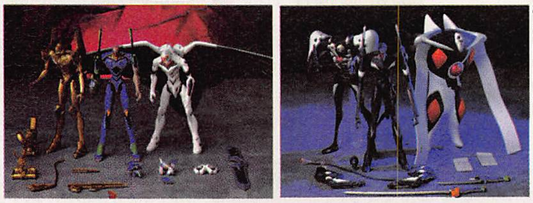
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EVANGELION ACTION FIGURES The brilliance of the anime all packed up in an awesome array of action figure bliss. Amazing high quality, extreme detail, multi positional 10" action figures. **$34.95 ea.**



VAMPIRE HUNTER COLLECTOR FIGURES Straight out of the screen! 12" vinyl positional figures, with ceramic features and real human hair. Extremely collectable, very limited stock! **$89.95 each.**

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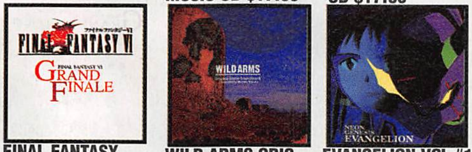
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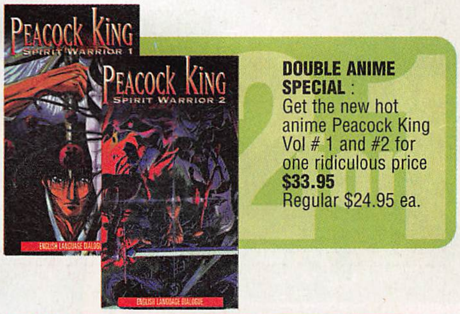


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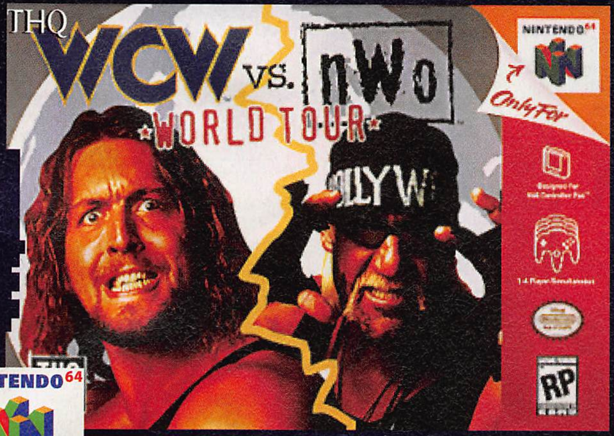
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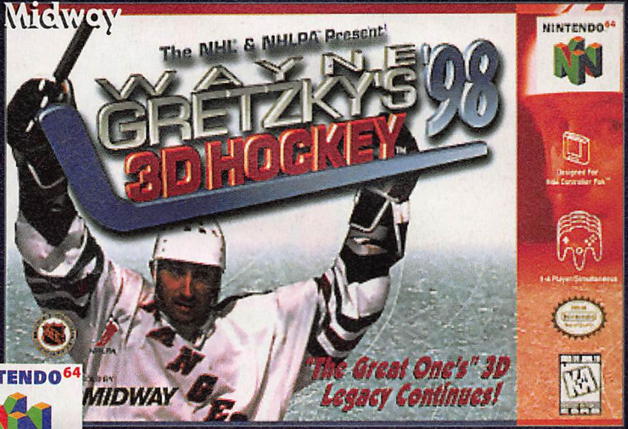
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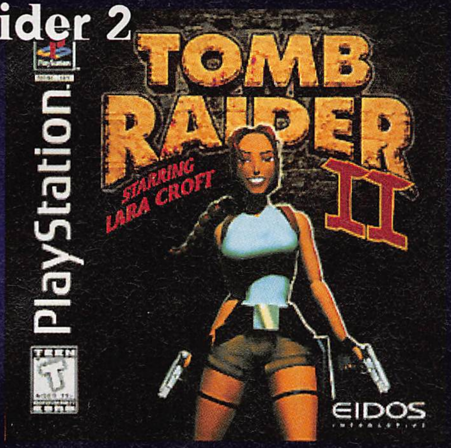
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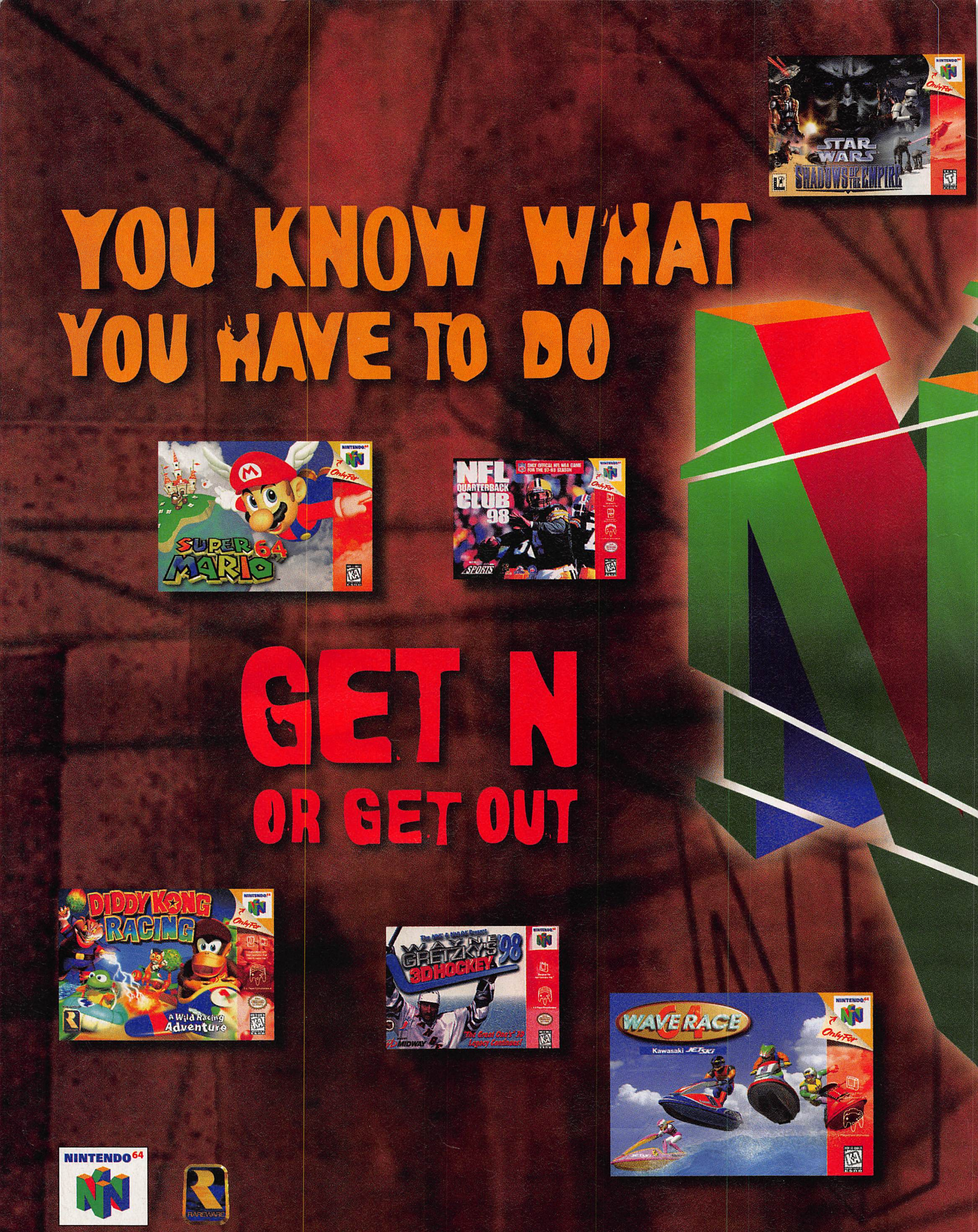
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